

THE
FIRST PART
OF
THE HISTORY OF
THE
LIFE and DEATH
OF THE
HOLY IESVS.

BEGINNING

At the Annuntiation to the Blessed Virgin
MARY, until his Baptism and Temptation,
INCLVSIVELY.

WITH
CONSIDERATIONS and DISCOURSES
upon the several parts of the Story, and Prayers
fitted to the several Mysteries.



LONDON,
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RIGHT HONORABLE

and most truly Noble Lord,

CHRISTOPHER

LORD HATTON.

Baron HATTON of Kirby, &c.

MY LORD,

WHEN interest divides the Church, and the calentures of men breathe out in problems and unactive discourses, each part in pursuance of its owne portion follows that proposition which complies with, and bends in all the flexures of its temporall ends; and while all strive for truth, they hug their owne opinions dressed up in herimagery, and they dispute for ever, and either the question is indeterminable, or

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which is worse, men will never be convinced. For such is the nature of disputings, that they begin commonly in mistakes, they proceed with zeale and fancy, and end not at all, but in schismes and uncharitable Names, and too often dip their feet in blood; In the meane time, he that gets the better of his adversary, oftentimes gets no good to himselfe, because although he hath fast hold upon the right side of the probleme, he may be an ill man in the midst of his triumphant disputations. And therefore it was not here that GOD, would have mans felicity to grow: For our condition had been extremely miserable, if our finall state had been placed upon an uncertain hill, and the way to it, had been upon the waters, upon which no spirit but that of contradiction and discord did ever move; for the man should have tended to an end of an uncertaine dwelling, and walked to it by wayes not discernable, and arrived thither by chance, which because it is irregular, would have discomposed the pleasures of a Christian hope, as the very disputing hath already destroyed charity, and disunited the continuity of Faith, and in the consequent there would be no
virtue,

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vertue, and no felicity. But GOD who never loved, that man should be too ambitiously buisy in imitating his wisdom (and Man lost Paradise for it) is most desirous we should imitate his goodnesse and transcribe copies of those excellent Emanations from his Holinesse, whereby as he communicates himselfe to us in mercyes, so he propounds himself imitable by us in graces. And in order to this, GOD hath described our way plaine, certaine, and determined; and although he was pleased to leave us indetermined in the Questions of exteriour communion, yet he put it past all question, that we are bound to be charitable. He hath placed the question of *the State of separation* in the darke, in hidden and undiscerned regions; but he hath opened the windowes of heaven and given great light to us, teaching how we are to demean our selves in *the state of conjunction*. Concerning the salvation of *Heathens* he was not pleased to give us account, but he hath clearely described the duty of *Christians*, and tells upon what termes alone *wee* shall be saved; And although the not inquiring into the wayes of GOD

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and the strict rules of practise hath been instrumentall to the preserving them free from the serpentine enfoldings and labyrinths of dispute; yet God also with a great designe of mercy hath writ his Commandments in so large characters, and engraved them in such tables, that no man can want the records, nor yet skill to reade the handwriting upon this wall, if he understands, what he understands, that is, what is placed in his own spirit. For God was therefore desirous that humane nature should be perfected with morall, not intellectuall excellencies, because these onely are of use and compliance with our present state and conjunction. If God had given to Eagles an appetite to swim, or to the Elephant strong desires to fly, he would have ordered that an abode in the sea and the aire respectively should have been proportionable to their manner of living; for so God hath done to man, fitting him with such excellencies which are *usefull* to him in his wayes and progress to perfection. A man hath great *use* and need of justice; and all the instances of morality serve his naturall and politicall ends, he cannot live without

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without them, and be happy; but the filling the roomes of the understanding with aery and ineffective notions is just such an excellency, as it is in a man to imitate the voice of birds; at his very best, the Nightingale shall excell him, and it is of no use to that end, which G O D designed him in the first intentions of creation.

In pursuance of this consideration I have chosen to serve the purposes of religion by doing assistance to that part of Theology which is wholly practicall, that which makes us wiser, therefore, because it makes us better. And truly (My Lord) it is enough to weary the spirit of a Disputer, that he shall argue till he hath lost his voice, and his time, and sometimes the question too, and yet no man shall be of his minde more then was before. How few turne Lutherans, or Calvinists, or Roman Catholikes from the religion either of their Country or interest? Possibly two or three weake or interested, phantastick and easy, prejudicate and effeminate understandings passe from Church to Church upon grounds as weake as those for which formerly they did dissent, and the same arguments are good or bad as ex-

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terious accidents , or interious appetites shall determine. I deny not, but for great causes some opinions are to be quitted ; but when I consider how few doe forsake any , and when any doe , oftentimes they choose the wrong side , and they that take the righter , doe it so by contingency , and the advantage also is so little , I believe that the triumphant persons have but small reason to please themselves in gaining proselytes , since their purchase is so small , and as inconsiderable to their triumph , as it is unprofitable to them who change for the worse , or for the better upon unworthy motives. In all this there is nothing certain , nothing noble. But hee that followes the worke of GOD , that is , labours to gaine soules , not to a Sect , and a subdivision , but to the Christian Religion , that is , to the Faith and obedience of the LORD JESUS , hath a promise to be assisted , and rewarded ; and all those that goe to *Heaven* , are the purchase of such undertakings , the fruit of such culture and labours ; for it is onely a holy life that lands us there.

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And now (My Lord) I have told you my reasons, I shall not be ashamed to say that I am weary and toyled with rowing up and downe in the seas of questions, which the interests of Christendome have commenced; and in many propositions of which I am heartily perswaded, *I am not certaine* that I am not deceived; and I find that men are most confident of those articles which they can so little prove, that they never made questions of them; But *I am most certaine* that by living in the Religion and feare of God, in obedience to the King, in the charities and duties of communion with my *Spirituell Guides*, in justice and love with all the world in their severall proportions, I shall not faile of that end which is perfective of Humane nature, and which will never be obtained by disputing.

Here therefore when I had fixed my thoughts, upon sad apprehensions that God was removing our Candlestick (for why should he not, when men themselves put the light out, and pull the stars from their orbs, so hastening the day of Gods judgement) I was desirous to put a portion of the holy fire

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fire into a repository, which might help to reekindle the *Incense*, when it shall please God Religion shall return, and all his servants shall sing [*In convertendo captivitatem Sion*] with a voyce of Eucharist.

But now (my Lord) although the results and issues of my retirements and study, doe naturally run towards you, and carry no excuse for their forwardnesse, but the confidence that your goodnesse rejects no emanation of a great affection, yet in this addresse I am apt to promise to my self a faire interpretation, because I bring you an instrument, and auxiliaries to that devotion, whereby we beleewe you are deare to God, and know, that you are, to good men. And if these litle sparkes of holy fire which I have heaped together doe not give life to your prepared and already enkindled spirit, yet they will sometimes help to entertaine a thought, to actuate a passion, to imploy and hallow a fancy, and put the body of your piety into fermentation, by presenting you with the circumstances and parts of such meditations, which are symbolicall to those of your daily office, and which are the *pass-times* of your severest hours. My
Lord,

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Lord, I am not so vaine, to thinkethat in the matter of devotion, and the rules of justice and religion (which is the buisinesse of your life) I can adde any thing to your heape of excellent things; but I have — knowne and felt comfort by reading, or hearing from other persons, what I knew my selfe; and it was unactive upon my spirit, till it was made vigorous and effective from without; and in this sense, I thought I might not be uselesse and impertinent.

My Lord, I designed to be instrumentall to the salvation of all persons that shall reade my booke; but unlesse (because soules are equall in their substance and equally redeemed) we are obliged to wish the salvation of all men, with the greatest, that is, with equall desires, I did intend in the highest manner I could to expresse how much I am to pay to you, by doing the offices of that duty, which although you lesse neede, yet I was most bound to pay, even the duties and charities of religion; having this designe, that when posterity (for certainly they will learne to distinguish things and persons) shall see your honoured Name imployed to separate and rescue these papers from contempt
b they

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they may with the more confidence expect in them something fit to be offered to such a Personage. My Lord, I have my end if I serve God, and you, and the needs and interest of soules; but shall think my returne full of reward, if you shall give me pardon, and put me into your Letanies, and account me in the number of your relatives and servants; for indeed, My Lord, I am most heartily

Your Lordships most affectionate

and most

Obliged Servant,

TAYLOR.



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Christian Religion hath so many exterior advantages to its reputation and advancement, from the Author, and from the Ministers; from the fountain of its Origination, and the channels of conveyance; (GOD being the Author, the word incarnate being the great Doctor and Preacher of it, his life and death being its consignation, the holy Spirit being the great argument and demonstration of it, and the Apostles the organs and conduits of its dissemination) that it were glorious beyond all opposition and disparagement, though we should not consider the excellency of its matter, and the certainty of its probation, and the efficacy of its power, and the perfection and rare accomplishment of its designe. But I consider that Christianity is therefore very little understood, because it is reproached upon that pretence, which its *very being* and *designe* does infinitely confute. It is esteemed to be a Religion contrary in its principles, or in its precepts to that wisdom, * whereby the world is governed, and Common-wealths increase, and greatesse is acquired, and Kings goe to warre, and our ends of interest are served, and promoted, and that it is an institution so wholly in order to *another* world, that it does not at all communicate with *this*, neither in its end, nor in its discourses, neither in the policy nor in the philosophy: and therefore as the doctrine of the *Crosse* was entertained at first in *scorne* by the Greeks, in *offence* and *indignation* by the Jewes; so is the whole systeme and collective body of Christian Philosophy esteemed imprudent by the politicks of the world, and flat and irrationall by some men of excellent wit and sublime discourse; who because the permissions and dictates of naturall, true, and essentiall reason are at no hand to be contradicted by any superinduced Discipline, think, that whatsoever seemes *contrary* to their *reason* is also *violent* to our *nature*, and offers indeed a good to us, but by wayes unnaturall and unreasonable. And I think they are very great strangers to the present affaires and persuasions of the world, who know not, that Christianity is very much undervalued

* *Fatis accede, Deisque, Et cole felices, miseris fuge, sidera terra. Ut distans, et flamma mari sic utile tacho.*
Sceptra sum visis, tota peris, si pendere iusta Incipit: evectique arces respectus honesti. Libertas scelerum est, qua regna invisa tuetur, Sublansque modus gladiis: facere omnia seve
Non impune licet nisi dum facis, exeat aula Qui volet esse pius, virtus et summa potestas Non coeunt: Semper memet quem seva pudebunt. Lucan. l. 3.

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valued upon this principle, men insensibly becoming unchristian, because they are perswaded, that much of the greatness of the world is contradicted by the Religion. But certainly no mistake can be greater. For the holy JESUS by his doctrine did instruct the understandings of men, made their appetites more obedient, their reason better principled, and argumentative with lesse deception, their wills apter for noble choyses, their governments more prudent, their present felicities greater, their hopes more excellent, and that duration which was intended to them by their Creator he made manifest to be a state of glory; and all this was to be done and obtained respectively, *by the wayes of reason and nature*, such as GOD gave to man, then, when at first he designed him to a noble, and an immortall condition; the Christian Law being for the substance of it, nothing but the restitution and perfection of the Law of Nature. And this I shall represent in all the parts of its naturall progression, and I intend it not only as a Preface to the following books, but for an *introduction* and *invitation* to the whole Religion.

2
Ratio Dei Deus est humanis rebus consulens, qua causa est hominibus bene beateque vivendi, si non concessum sibi munus a summo Deo negligant. Chalced. ad Timæ. 16.

For GOD, when he made the first emanations of his eternall being, and created man as the end of all his productions here below, designed him to an end such as himselfe was pleased to choose for us, and gave him abilities proportionable to attaine that end. GOD gave a man a reasonable and an intelligent nature. And to this noble nature he designed as noble an end; *an end of happinesse* certainly. For since GOD gave him proper and peculiar appetites with proportion to their owne objects, and gave him reason and abilities, not only to perceive the sapidnesse and relish of those objects, but also to make reflex acts upon such perceptions, and to perceive that they did perceive, which was a rare instrument of pleasure and paine respectively, it is but reasonable to think, that GOD, who created him in mercy, did not onely proportion a being to his nature, but also a *perfect being* proper to its capacities. For if this being should be a state of affliction, that is, of objects disproportionate to his naturall appetites, it would have beene the greatest unmercifulnesse in the World; disproportionate objects being meere instances of affliction, and those unsatisfied appetites nothing else but instruments of torment.

3.

The end therefore of man, that which is perspective of his being, and the completion of all his orderly desires, is that which we call, *a happy life*, or *happy being*, [a being] according to the intention of nature, [and a happinesse] according to his appetites. Now concerning *his being* I consider, that it was in nature and in GODS prime intention designed to be *for ever*. Here or otherwhere is not materiall to the consideration, whether in earth, or in heaven, in Paradise or out of it. For whensoever GOD should alter the manner, and the circumstances of the abode, yet if man did remaine happy, there was no deficiency from the end of his first intention; but *for ever* he ought to live, by the design of GOD. For man was created with an immortall spirit. It matters not, whether he knew it then or no. For birds, and beasts, and bees are directed and infallibly carried to that end, to which they are fitted with organs and intermediall appetites, and do all things towards it but understand it. And it matters not, whether we can now, or ever could prove it by an infallible demonstration, or come to know it by a meere naturall instrument. For it is now revealed to us by JESUS CHRIST, that the soul cannot be killed; and in all ages men did

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did heartily believe it, and had appetites either produced by that opinion, or by the thing it self proper for an immortall creature. But in the thing it selfe it is true (however we come to know it) that GOD *breathed into man a living, and an incorruptible never dying spirit.*

Now upon supposition of this proposition, which was always true, and is long since by revelation (if not by philosophy) made evident, we shall finde, that whatsoever instruments GOD fitted in order to mans last end, that is, of *living happily* according to the duration of an immortall creature, must also be sufficient towards the *life of immortality*; or else it was insufficient in the nature of the thing. There is no peradventure but that GOD did furnish his nature with abilities to arrive to the end of his nature, just as all other creatures had sufficient instruments, appetites and powers to arrive to that end, which God designed to them in their creations. And if it had been otherwise, Man had been a creature imperfect, and therefore not good: for all such imperfection, which is a deficiency from the naturall end, is monstrosity, and an evil naturally and physically, and contrary to the saying of *Moses* [and GOD saw all, that he had made, and behold it was very good.]

Onely this, because all the changes and varieties of state were not revealed to man, he had onely explicate appetites to what he saw before him, that is, towards a happy life indefinitely, and (because he knew of nothing else) of living well in this world, and as long as he could, that is, as much as he could obtaine, *for ever*. And when GOD gave him appetites in order to *live well and happily*, when ever GOD should take him from this state, which he onely knew and was in possession of, it is certain, that the same instruments, which served the regular ends of nature here, would also serve it for ever, because man had no other way of obtaining it. And therefore GOD, who in mercy designed him to an eternall being, and yet tooke him from this, to the securing of which man did the worke of nature and Gods intention, it must follow that God will either give it him, as a gift or as reward, or as a naturall consequent of living according to Gods iⁿten^tion, all which will be alike in the thing and make a difference in Logique, but nothing in the substance of affaires.

That this intention of GOD and nature should be effected, that is, that man should become happy, it is naturally necessary, that as his regular appetites should have an object appointed them, in the fruition of which felicity must consist. Because nothing is felicity, but when, what was reasonably or orderly desired is possessed : for the having what is not desired, or the wanting of what we desired, or the desiring what we should not, are the several constituent parts of infelicity ; and it can have no other constitution.

Now the first appetite man had in order to his great end was to be as perfect as he could, * that is, to be as like the best thing he knew, as his nature and condition would permit; and although by Adams vanity and affection to his wife, and by GODS appointing fruit for him, we see the lower appetites were first provided for; yet the first appetite which man had, as he distinguishes from lower creatures, was to be like God; (for by that the Devil tempted him) and in order to that he had naturally sufficient instruments and abilities. For although by being abused with the Devils sophistry he chose an incompetent instrument, yet because it is naturally certain, that love is the greatest assimilation of the object and the faculty, Adam by loving God might very well approach nearer him

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* Εἰ τὴν φωνήν
δὲν τὸ βίβλος,
ἐν τῇ φωνῇ
ἐν τῇ φωνῇ (φῶν),
ἐν τῇ φωνῇ
τῇ ἐν τῇ φωνῇ
τὸ βίβλος. Arift
2. de calo.

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manner, which we believe honourable and apt, the best thing we have.

The next appetite a man hath, is to beget one like himselfe, GOD having implanted that appetite into man for the propagation of mankind, and given it as his first blessing and permission. *It is not good for man to be alone, and, Increase and multiply.* And Artemidorus had something of this doctrine, when he reckons these two lawes of nature, *Deum colere, mulieribus vincti.* To worship GOD, and to be overcome by women, in proportion to his two first appetites of nature, to be like GOD, and to have another like himselfe. This appetite GOD onely made regular by his first provisions of satisfaction. He gave to man a woman for a wife, for the companion of his sorrowes, for the instrument of multiplication, and yet provided him but of one, and intimated he should have no more, which we doe not onely know by an after revelation, the holy JESUS having declared it to have been GODS purpose, but Adam himselfe understood it, as appears by his first discourses at the entertainment of his new bride. And although there were permissions afterward of Polygamy, yet there was a greater pretence of necessity at first, because of enlarging and multiplying fountains rather then channels, and three or four at first would have enlarged mankind by greater proportion then many more afterwards; little distances neere the centre make greater and larger figures, then when they part neere the fringes of the circle, and therefore those after permissions were to avoid a greater evill, not a hallowing of the license, but a reproach of their infirmity. And certainly the multiplication of wives is contrariant to that designe of love and endecrement, which GOD intended at first between man and wife.

— Communia mille :

*Non illis generis nexu, non pignora cura,
Sed numero languet pietas* —

And amongst them, that have many wives, the relation and necessity is arising and loose, and they are allequally contemptible, because the minde entertains no loves or union, where the object is multiplyed, and the affixted and distracted. So that this having a great commodity in order to mans great end, that is, of living well and happily seemes to be intended by GOD in the nature of things and instruments naturall and reasonable towards mans end; and therefore to be a law, if not naturall, yet at least positive and superinduced at first, in order to mans proper ends. However, by the provision which GOD made for satisfaction of this appetite of nature, all those actions which deflect and erre from the order of this end are unnatural and inordinate, and not permitted by the concession of GOD, nor the order of the thing; but such actions onely, which naturally produce the end of this provision and satisfaction, are naturall, regular and good.

But by this meanes man grew into a society and a family, and having productions of his own kinde, which he naturally desired and therefore loved, he was consequently obliged to assist them in order to their end, that they might become like him, that is, perfect men, and brought up to the same state; and they also by being at first, impotent, and for ever after beneficiaries and obliged persons, are for the present subject to their parents, and for ever after bound to duty, because there is nothing which they can doe, that can directly produce so great a benefit to the

Parents,

11.

De sum. sign.

Gen. 2. 4.

*Clautham, bell.
Gildon.*

Salust. Jugurth.

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Parents, as they have to the children. From hence naturally descend all those mutuall obligations between parents and children, which are instruments of protection and benefit on the one side, and duty and obedience on the other, and all these to be expressed according as either of their necessities shall require, or any stipulation or contract shall appoint, or shall be superinduced by any positive lawes of GOD or man.

13.

In naturall descent of the generations of man this one first family was multiplied so much that, for conveniency they were forced to divide their dwellings, and this they did by families especially, the great Father being the *Major domo* to all his *minors*. And this division of dwellings, although it kept the same forme and power in the severall families, which were in the originall, yet it introduced some new necessities, which although they varied in the instance, yet were to be determined by such instruments of reason, which were given to us at first upon foresight of the publike necessities of the world. And when the families came to be divided that their common Parent being extinct, no Master of a family had power over another Master; the rights of such men and *their naturall power became equall*, because there was nothing to distinguish them, and because they might do *equall injury*, and invade each others possessions, and disturb their peace and surprize their liberty. And so also was their power of doing benefit equall, though not the same in kinde. But GOD who made man a sociable creature, because he knew it was *not good for him to be alone*, so dispensed the abilities and possibilities of doing good, that in something or other every man might need or be benefited by * every man; therefore that they might pursue the end of nature, and their own appetites of living well and happily, they were forced to consent to such contracts which might secure and supply to every one those good things without which he could not live happily. Both the appetites, the irascible and the concupiscible, fear of evill, and desire of benefit were the sufficient endermers of contracts, of societies, and repablikes. And upon this stocke were decreed and hallowed all those propositions, without which bodies politicke and societies of men cannot be happy. And in the transaction of these, many accidents daily happening, it grew still reasonable, that is, necessary to the end of living happily, that all those after obligations should be observed with the proportion of the same faith and endearment, which bound the first contracts. For though the naturall law be always the same, yet some parts of it are primely necessary, others by supposition and accident, and both are of the same necessity, that is, equally necessary in the severall cases. Thus, to obey a King is as necessary and naturally reasonable as to obey a Father, that is, supposing there be a King, as it is certain naturally a man cannot be, but a Father must be supposed. If it be made necessary that I promise, it is also necessary, that I performe it: for else I shall returne to that inconvenience, which I sought to avoid, when I made the promise; and though the instance be very farre removed from the first necessities and accidents of our prime being, and production; yet the reason still pursues us, and naturall reason reaches up to the very last minutes, and orders the most remote particulars of our well being.

* *Animus inveniat liberalitatis materiam, etiam inter angustias pauperatis. Senec. de benefic. l. 1.*

14.

Thus; not to steal, not to commit adultery, not to kill, are very reasonable prosecutions of the great end of nature, of *living well and happily*.

But

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But when a man is said to steal, when to be a murderer, when to be incestuous, the naturall law doth not teach; but when the superinduced constitution hath determined the particular law, by naturall reason we are obliged to observe it. Because though the civill power makes the instance, and determines the particular, yet right reason makes the sanction and passes the obligation. The Law of nature makes the Major proposition, but the civill constitution, or any superinduced law makes the assumption in a practicall syllogisme. To kill is not murder, but to kill such persons, whom I ought not. It was not murder among the Jewes to kill a manslayer, before he entred a city of refuge: to kill the same man after his entry was. Among the Romanes to kill an *adulteresse or a Ravisher in the act, was lawfull, with us it is murder. Murder, and incest, and theft, alwayes were unlawful, but the same actions were not alwayes the same crimes. And it is just with these as with disobedience, which was ever criminall; but the same thing was not estimated to be disobedience, nor indeed could any thing be so, till the sanction of a superiour had given the instance of obedience. So for theft, to catch fish in rivers, or Deare or Pigeons, when they were esteemed *feranatura* of a wilde condition and so *primo occupantis*, was lawfull, just as to take or kill badgers or foxes, and beavers and Lyons. But when the lawes had appropriated rivers, and divided shores, and imparked Deare, and housed Pigeons, it became theft to take them without leave. To despoile the Egyptians was not theft, when GOD, who is the LORD of all possessions had bidden the Israelites. But to do so now were the breach of the naturall law, and of a Divine Commandment. For the naturall law (I said) is eternall in the sanction, but variable in the instance and the expression. And indeed the lawes of nature are very few: They were but two at first, and but two at last, when the great change was made from families to kingdomes. The first is to *do duty to God*. The second is to *do to our selves and our neighbours, that is, to our neighbours as to our selves*, all these actions, which *naturally, reasonably*, or by institution or emergent necessity are in order to a happy life. Our B. Saviour reduces all the law to these two. 1. *Love the Lord with all thy heart*. 2. *Love thy neighbour as thy selfe*. In which I observe in verification of my former discourse, that love is the first naturall bond of duty to God, and so also it is to our neighbour. And therefore all entercourse with our neighbour was founded in, and derived from the two greatest endearments of love in the world. A man came to have a neighbour by being a husband and a Father.

So that still there are but two great naturall lawes, we remaining essentially, and by the very designe of creation obliged to God in *all*, and to our neighbours in the proportions of equality [*as thy selfe*] that is, that he be permitted and promoted in the order to his living well and happily as thou art, for love being there, not an affection, but the duty that results from the first naturall bands of love, which began neighbourhood, signifies justice, equality and such reasonable proceedings which are in order to our common end of a happy life, and is the same with that other, *Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do you to them*, and that is, certainly the greatest and most effective love, because it best promotes that excellent end, which God designed for our naturall perfection. All other particulars are but prosecutions of these two, that is, of the order of nature: save onely, that there is a third law, which is rather supposed, then at the first expressed, because a man

* A. Gellius.
l. 10. 23.

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isreasonably to be presumed to have in him a sufficient stocke of selfe love to serve the ends of his nature and creation, and that is, that man demeanes and use his own body in that decorum, which is most orderly and proportionate to his perfective end of a happy life; which Christian religion calls [sobriety] and it is a prohibition of those uncharitable selfe destroying sins of drunkennes, gluttony, and inordinate and unreasonable manners of lust, destructive of natures intendments, or at least no wayes promoting them. For it is naturall lawfull to satisfy any of these desires, when the desire does not carry the satisfaction beyond the designe of nature, that is, to the violation of health or that happy living, which consists in observing those contracts which mankind thought necessary to be made in order to the same great end, or unlesse God hath superinduced a restraint, making an instance of sobriety to become an act of religion, or to passe into an expression of duty to him. And then it is not a naturall, but religious sobriety, and may be instanced in fasting or abstinence from some kinds of meat, or some times or manners of conjugation. These are the three naturall lawes described in the Christian doctrine, that we live, 1. godly, 2. soberly, 3. righteously. And the particulars of the first are ordinarily to be determined by God immediately, or his Vicegerents, and by reason observing and complying with the accidents of the world, and dispositions of things and persons. The second by the naturall order of nature, by sense, and by experience, And the third by humane contracts and civill lawes.

16.

The result of the preceding discourse is this. Man who was designed by GOD to a happy life, was fitted with sufficient meanes to attaine that end, so that he might, if he would, be happy; but he was a free agent and so might choose. And it is possible, that man may faile of his end, & be made miserable by God, by himselfe, or by his Neighbour. Or by the same persons he may be made happy in the same proportions, as they relate to him. If God be angry or disobeyed, he becomes our enemy, and so we faile: If our Neighbour be injured or impeded in the direct order to his happy living, he hath equall right against us, as we against him, and so we faile that way: And if I be intemperate, I grow sicke and worsted in some faculty, & so I am unhappy in my selfe. But if I obey God, and do right to my neighbour, and confine my selfe within the order and designe of nature, I am secured in all ends of blessing, in which I can be assisted by these three, that is, by all my relatives, there being no end of man designed by GOD in order to his happinesse, to which these are not proper and sufficient instruments. Man can have no other relations, no other discourses, no other regular appetites, but what are served and satisfied by religion, by sobriety, & by justice. There is nothing, whereby we can relate to any person, who can hurt us, or do us benefit but is provided for in these three. These therefore are all, and these are sufficient.

17.

But now it is to be enquired how these become lawes obliging us to sin. if we transgresse, even before any positive law of God be superinduced; for else, how can it be a naturall law, that is, a law obliging all nations, and all persons, even such, who have had no intercourse with God by way of speciall revelation, and have lost all memory of tradition? For either such persons, whatsoever they do shall obtaine that end, which God designed for them in their nature, that is, a happy life according to the duration of an immortall nature: or else they shall perish for prevaricating of these Lawes. And yet if they were no lawes to them, and decreed and made sacred by sanction, promulgation.

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mulgation and appendant penalties, they could not so oblige them as to become the rule of virtue or vice.

When God gave us naturall reason, that is, sufficient ability to doe all, that should be necessary to live well and happily, he also knew, that some appetites might be irregular, just as some stomackes would be sicke, and some eyes blind; and a man being a voluntary agent might choose an evill with as little reason as the Angels of darknes did, that is, they might do unreasonably because they would do so, and then a mans understanding should serve him but as an instrument of mischief, and his will carry him on to it with a blind & impotent desire, and then the beauteous order of creatures would be discompos'd by unreasonable and unconsidering or evill persons. And therefore it was most necessary, that man should have his appetites confin'd within the designs of nature, and the order to his end; for a will without the restraint of a superiour power or a perfect understanding, is like a knife in a child's hand, as apt for mischief as for use. Therefore it pleas'd God to bind man by the signature of lawes to observe those great naturall reasons, without which man could not arrive at the great end of Gods designing, that is, he could not live well and happily. God therefore made it the first law to love him, and which is all one, to worship him, to speake honour of him, and to expresse it in all our wayes, the chiefe whereof is obedience. And this we find in the instance of that positive precept, which God gave to Adam, which was nothing but a particular of the great generall; but in this there is little scruple, because it is not imaginable, that GOD would in any period of time not take care, that himselfe be honoured, his glory being the very end why he made man; and therefore it must be certaine, that this did at the very first passe into a law.

But concerning this and other things, which are usually called naturall lawes I consider, that the things themselves were such, that the doing them was therefore declared to be a law, because the not doing them did certainly bring a punishment proportionable to the crime, that is, a just deficiency from the end of creation, from a good and happy life, 2. and also a punishment of a guilty conscience; which I doe not understand to be a feare of hell, or of any supervening penalty, unlesse the conscience be accidentally instructed into such feares by experience, or revelation; but it is a *malum in genere rationis*, a disease or evill of the reasonable faculty, that, as there is a rare content in the discourses of reason, there is a satisfaction, an acquiescency like that of creatures in their proper place and definite actions, and competent perfections; so in prevaricating the naturall law there is a dissatisfaction, a disease, a removing out of the place, an unquietnesse of spirit, even when there is no monitor, or observer. "Adeo facinorosa atque flagitia sua ipsi quoque in supplicium verterant. Neque frustra præstantissimus [Plato] sapientia firmare solitus est, si recludamur Tyrannorum mentes, posse aspicimur et ictus, quando ut corpora verberibus, ita severiâ libidine, malis consultis animus dilaceretur, said Tacitus out of Plavo, whose words are: 'Αὐτὰ πάλαι οὐ μόνον βασιλεὺς ἐπιδιδόμηντο, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐπὶ τοῖς βασιλεῦσι, ἃ δυνάμει ἰσχυρὰ πρὸς τὸν ἑαυτοῦ νότον ὡς τῶν ὑποφύλων ἀπὸ διακρίσεως, καὶ ἐκ τῆς ἀδικίας.' It is naturally certaine, that the cruelty of Tyrants, torments themselves, and is a hooke in their nostrils, and a scourge to their spirit, and the pungency of forbidden lust is truly a thorne in the flesh, full of anguish and secret vexation.

18.

19.

Annal. 6.

in Gorgia.

Lucian. in Ca-

topl: "Rhu-

damanth.

'Αὐτὸν ὡς τῶν

ἰσχυρὰ πρὸς τὸν

ἑαυτοῦ νότον ὡς

τῶν ὑποφύλων

ἀπὸ διακρίσεως,

καὶ ἐκ τῆς ἀδικίας.

ἡ δὲ πρὸς τὸν

ἑαυτοῦ νότον ὡς

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*Claudian. de
Rufin.*

*Quid deimens manifesta negas? en peccus iniusta
Deformant macula, vitisque inolevit imago.*

said *Claudian* of *Rufinus*. And it is certain to us and verified by the experience and observation of all wise nations, though not naturally demonstrable, that this secret punishment is sharpened and promoted in degrees by the hand of heaven, the finger of the same hand, that writ the law in our understandings.

20.

But the prevarications of the naturall law have also their portion of a speciall punishment besides the scourge of an unquiet spirit; the man that disturbs his Neighbours rest, meets with disturbances himselfe, and since I have naturally no more power over my neighbour than he hath over me (unless he descended naturally from me) he hath an equall priviledge to defend himselfe, and to secure his quiet by disturbing the order of my happy living, as I doe his. And this equall permission is certainly so great a sanction and signature of the law of justice, that in the just proportion of my receding from the reasonable prosecution of my end, in the same proportion and degree my own infelicity is become certaine; and this in severall degrees up to the losse of all, that is, of life it selfe; for where no further duration or differing state is known, there death is ordinarily esteemed the greatest infelicity; where something beyond it is known, there also it is known, that such prevarication makes that further duration to be unhappy. So that an affront is naturally punished by an affront, the losse of a tooth with the losse of a tooth, of an eye with an eye, the violent taking away of anothers mans goods by the loosing my own. For I am lyable to as great an evill as I inferre, and naturally he is not unjust that inflicts it. And he that is drunke is a foole or a madman for the time, and thats his punishment, and declares the law and the sin: and so in proportions to the transgressions of sobriety. But when the first of the naturall lawes is violated, that is, God is disobeyed or dishonoured, or when the greatest of naturall evils is done to our Neighbour, then death became the penalty; to the first, in the first period of the world: to the second, at the restitution of the world, that is, at the beginning of the second period. He that did attempt to kill from the beginning of ages might have been resisted, and killed, if the assaulted could not else be safe, but he that killed actually as *Cain* did, could not be killed himselfe, till the law was made in *Noahs* times; because there was no person living, that had equall power on him, & had been naturally injured; while the thing was doing, the assailant and the assailed had equall power, but when it was done and one was killed, he that had the power or right of killing his murderer, is now dead, and his power is extinguished with the man. But after the flood the power was put into the hand of some trusted person, who was to take the forfeiture. And thus I conceive these naturall reasons in order to their proper end became laws, & bound fast by the band of annexed and consequent penalties; *metum prosus et noxam conscientia pro facere haberi*, said *Tacitus*. And that fully explains my sense.

21.

And thus death was brought into the world, not by every prevarication of any of the lawes, by any instance of unreasonableesse: for in proportion to the evill of the action would be the evill of the suffering, which in all cases would not arrive at death; as every injury, every intemperance, should not have been capitall. But some things were made evill by a superinduced prohibition, as eating one kinde of fruit: some

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some things were evill by inordination ; the first was morally evill, the second was evill naturally. Now the first sort brought in death by a prime sanction ; the second by degrees and variety of accident. For every disobedience and transgression of that law, which GOD made as the instance of our doing him honour and obedience, is an integrall violation of all the band between him and us ; it does not grow in degrees according to the instance and subject matter ; for it is as great a disobedience to eat when he hath forbidden us, as to offer to climb to heaven with an ambitious tower. And therefore it is but reasonable for us to fear, and just in him to make us at once suffer death, which is the greatest of naturall evils, for disobeying him. To which death we may arrive by degrees in doing actions against the reasonableness of sobriety and justice, but cannot arrive by degrees of disobedience to God or irreligion, because every such act deserves the worst of things ; but the other naturally deserves no greater evil then the proportion of their own inordination, till God by a superinduced law hath made them also to become acts of disobedience as well as inordination, that is, morally evill, as well as naturally ; For *by the law* (saith *S. Paul*) *sin became exceeding sinfull*, that is, had a new degree of obliquity added to it. But this was not at first. For therefore (saith *S. Paul*) Before or [until the Law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no Law] Meaning, that those sins which were forbidden by *Moses Law* were actually in the manners of men & the customes of the world, but they were not imputed, that is, to such personall punishments and consequent evils, which afterwards those sins did introduce, because those sins which were onely evil by inordination, and discomposure of the order of mans end of living happily, were made unlawful upon no other stock, but that God would have man to live happily, and therefore gave him reason to effect that end ; and if a man became unreasonable, and did things contrary to his end, it was impossible for him to be happy, that is, he should be miserable in proportion. But in that degree and manner of evill they were imputed, and that was sanction enough to raise naturall reason up to the constitution of a Law.

Rom. 7. 13.

Rom. 5. 13.

3. The Law of nature being thus decreed and made obligatory, was a sufficient instrument of making man happy, that is, in producing the end of his Creation. But as *Adam* had evill discourses and irregular appetites before he fell, for they made him fall, and as the Angels, who had no originall sin, yet they chose evill at the first, when it was wholly arbitrary in them to do so or otherwise ; so did man. GOD made man upright, and hee sought out many inventions. Some men were ambitious, and by incompetent meanes would make their brethren to be their servants. Some were covetous and would usurp that, which by an earlier distinction had passed into private possession, and then they made new principles, and new discourses, such which were reasonable in order to their private ends, but not to the publike benefit.

22.

And when once they broke the order of creation, it is easie to understand by what necessities of consequence they run into many sins and irrational proceedings. *Ælian* tells of a Nation, who had a law binding them to beat their parents to death with clubs, when they lived to a decrepit and unprofitable age. The *Persian* Magi mingled with their Mothers and all their nearest relatives : And by a law of the *Venetians* (saies *Bodinus*) a son in banishment was redeemed from the sentence, if he killed his banished

23.

*Tua m's idus
is, yelw, Dixit
Porphyrius.*

De rep. l. 1. c. 4

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Οὐκ ἀδίκῃ ὡς
 παρὰ τοῖς πα-
 λαιοῖς τοῖς ἀντι-
 οῖς, ἀλλ' ἵ-
 στέρας. Schsli-
 ast. in Hom.
 Odyss. τ. Vide
 etiam A. Gell.
 I. 11. c. 18.
 Ὁ σὺ δὲν ἄ-
 κροβαρῖς ἐν-
 μὲν ἱμερ-
 ρήσεις, καὶ ἐν
 φαντασίᾳ ἀν-
 τιστῆς καὶ ἰδῶς
 θαύλῃ καὶ ἰσχυ-
 ροτάτῃ διαφθ-
 ρίσιν τὰς φυ-
 σικὰς ἰσχυ-
 ρότητας.
 Just. Mart.
 Dial. Tryph.
 Rom. 1. 25,
 26. &c.
 24.

Father. And in *Homer's* time there were a sort of Pirats, who professed robbing, and did account it honourable. But the great pravarications of the lawes of nature were in the first Commandment; when the tradition concerning GOD was derived by a long line, and there were no visible remonstrances of an extraordinary power, they were quickly brought to believe, that he, whom they saw not, was not at all, especially being prompted to it by pride, tyranny, and a loose imperious spirit. Others fell to low opinions concerning GOD, and made such as they list of their own, and they were like to be strange GODS, which were of mans making. When man either maliciously or carelessly became unreasonable in the things that concerned GOD, GOD was pleased to give him over to a reprobate mind, that is, an unreasonable understanding, and false principles concerning himself and his Neighbour, that his sinne against the naturall law, might become its owne punishment, by discomposing his naturall happinesse. Atheisme and Idolatry brought in all unnaturall lusts, and many unreasonable injustices. And this we learne from S. Paul, *They did not like to retaine GOD in their knowledge, GOD gave them over to a reprobate minde, to doe those things which are not convenient, that is, incongruities towards the end of their creation; and so they became full of unrighteousnesse, lust, covetousnesse, malice, envy, strife, and murder, disobedient to parents, breakers of Covenants, unnaturall in their affections and in their passions; and all this was the consequent of breaking the first naturall Law. They changed the truth of God into a lye. For this cause God gave them up into vile affections.*

Now GOD who takes more care for the good of man, than man does for his owne, did not onely imprint these lawes in the hearts and understandings of man, but did also take care to make this light shine cleare enough to walk by, by adopting some instances of the naturall Lawes into Religion. Thus the law against murder became a part of Religion in the time of Noah; and some other things were then added concerning worshipping GOD, against Idolatry, and against unnaturall and impure mixtures. Some times GOD superadded judgements as to the 23000. Assyrians for fornication. For although these punishments were not threatened to the crime in the sanction and expresse of any definite law, and it could not naturally arrive to it by its inordination, yet it was as agreeable to the divine justice to inflict it, as to inflict the paines of hell upon evill livers, who yet had not any revelation of such intolerable danger, for it was sufficient that God had made such crimes to be against their very nature, and they, who will doe violence to their nature, to doe themselves hurt, and to displease GOD, deserve to lose the title to all those good things, which GOD was pleased to designe for mans finall condition. And because it grew habituall, customary, and of innocent reputation, it pleased GOD to call this precept out of the darknesse, whether their evill customes and false discourses had put it, and by such an extraregular but very signall punishment to remind them, that the naturall permissions of concubinate were onely confined to the ends of mankind, and were hallowed onely by the Faith and the designe of Marriage. And this was signified by Saint Paul, in these words. *They that sinne without the Law shall also perish without the Law; That is, by such judgements, which GOD hath inflicted on evill livers in severall periods of the World, irregularly indeed, not signified in kinde, but yet sent into the world with designes* of

Rom. 2. 12.

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of a great mercy, that the ignorances and prevarications and partiall abolitions of the naturall Law might bee cured and restored, and by the dispersion of prejudices, the state of naturall reason bee redintegrate.

Whatsoever was besides this, was accidentall and emergent, such as were the discourses of wise men, which GOD raised up in severall countryes and ages, as *Job*, and *Eliphaz*, and *Bildad*, and those of the families of the Patriarkes dispersed into severall countryes; and constant tradition in some noble and more eminent descents; and yet all this was so little and imperfect, not in it selfe, but in respect of the thicke cloud man had drawn before his understanding, that darknesse covered the face of the earth in a great proportion. Almost all the world were Idolaters, and when they had broken the first of the naturall lawes, the breach of the other was not onely naturally consequent, but also by divine judgement it descended infallibly. And yet GOD pitying mankind did not onely still continue the former remedies, and added blessings, *giving them fruitfull seasons, and filling their hearts with food and gladnesse*, so leaving the nations without excuse, but also made a very noble change in the world; for having chosen an excellent family, the Fathers of which lived exactly according to the naturall law, and with observation of those few superadded precepts, in which GOD did specify their prime duty, having swelled that family to a great nation, and given them possession of an excellent land, which GOD took from seven nations, because they were egregious violators of the naturall law, was pleased to make a very great restitution and declaration of the naturall law in many instances of religion and justice, which he framed into positive precepts, and adopted them into the family of the first originall instances, making them as necessary in the particulars, as they were in the primary obligations; but the instances were such, whereof some did relate onely to the present constitution of the common-wealth; others to such universall contracts, which obliged all the world by reason of the equal necessity of all mankind to admit them. And these him selfe writ on tables of stone, and dressed up their nation into a body politieke by an excellent systeme of politike laws, and adorned it with a rare religion, and left this nation as a piece of leaven in a masse of dow, not onely to doe honour to God, and happinesse to themselves, by those instruments, which he had now very much explicated, but also to transmitt the same reasonable propositions into other nations; and he therefore multiplied them to a great necessity of a dispersion, and they served the ends of God and of the naturall law by their ambulatory life, and their numerous disseminations. And this was it, which *S. Paul* affirms; *the law was added because of transgression*, meaning, that because men did transgress the naturall, God brought *Moses* law into the world to be as a strand to the inundation of impiety. And thus the world stood, till the fulnesse of time was come; for so we are taught by the Apostle. [*The law was added because of transgression,*] but the date of this was to expire at a certaine period; it was added to serve but [*till the seed should come to whom the promise was made.*]

For because *Moses* Law was but an imperfect explication of the naturall, there being divers parts of the three lawes of nature not at all explicated by that Covenant, nor the religion of prayers, nor the reasonableness of temperance and sobriety in opinion and diet, and in the

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more noble instances of humanity and doing benefit, it was so short, that as *S. Paul* says, *The Law could not make the comers thereunto perfect*; and which was most of all considerable, it was confined to a Nation, and the other parts of mankind had made so little use of the records of that Nation, that all the world was placed in darknesse, and sat in the shadow of death; Therefore it was, that in great mercy GOD sent his Son, a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of the people Israel to instruct those, and consummate these, that the imperfection of the one, and the meer darknesse of the other might be illustrated by the Son of righteousness. And this was by restoring the light of nature (which they by evil customs and false principles and evil lawes had obscured) by restoring man to the liberty of his spirit, by freeing him from the slavery of sin, under which they were so lost and oppressed, that all their discourses and conclusions, some of their morall Philosophy, and all their habituell practices were but servants of sin, and made to cooperate to that end, not which GOD intended as perfective of humane nature, but which the Devil and vicious persons superinduced to serve little ends and irregular, and to destroy the greater.

27.
Clem. Alex.
Stromat. I. c. 3.

For certain it is, Christianity is nothing else, but the most perfect design that ever was to make a man be happy in his whole capacity; and as the law was to the Jewes, so was Philosophy to the Gentiles, a Schoolemaster to bring them to CHRIST, to teach them the rudiments of happinesse, and the first and lowest things of reason, that when CHRIST was come, all mankind was might become perfect, that is, be made regular in their appetites, wise in their understandings, assisted in their duties, directed to & instructed in their great ends; and this is that which the Apostle calls [*being perfect men in CHRIST JESUS*] perfect in all the intendments of nature, and in all the designs of GOD. And this was brought to passe by discovering, and restoring, and improving the Law of nature, and by turning it all into Religion.

28.

For the natural law being a sufficient and a proportionate instrument and means to bring a man to the end designed in his creation, and this law being eternall and unalterable (for it ought to be as lasting and as unchangeable as the nature it selfe, so long as it was capable of a law) it was not imaginable, that the body of any law should make a new morality, new rules, and generall proportions, either of justice or religion or temperance, or felicity; the essentiall parts of all these consisting in naturall proportions, and means towards the consummation of mans last end, which was first intended, and is alwayes the same. It is as if there were a new truth in an essentiall and a necessary proposition. For although the instances may vary, there can be no new justice, no new temperance, no new relations, proper and naturall relations and intercourses between GOD and us, but what alwayes were in praises and prayers, in adoration and honour, and in the symbolicall expressions of GODS glory and our needs.

29.
'Οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλος
ἢ ὁ Θεὸς, ὁ ὁμο-
ούσιος, ὁ ἀ-
χώριος, ὁ ἀ-
σώματος, ὁ ἀ-
βυσσῶν, ὁ ἀ-
κρίβητος, ὁ ἀ-
κατάληπτος, ὁ
ἀόρατος, ὁ ἀ-
φύπνους, ὁ ἀ-
φ' ὧν πάντα
ἐγένετο, ὁ ἀ-
φ' ὧν πάντα
συντηρεῖται, ὁ
ἀφ' ὧν πάντα
ἀναστρέφεται.

Hence it comes that, that which is the most obvious and notorious appellate of the law of nature (that it is a law written in our hearts) was also recounted as one of the glories and excellencies of Christianity. *Plutarch* saying, that *Kings ought to be governed by lawes*, explains himselfe that this law must be a word, not written in books and tables, but dwelling in the minde, a living rule, the interior guide of their manners and Monitors of their life. And this was the same which *Saint Paul* expresses to be the guide of the Gentiles,

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tiles, that is, of all men naturally. *The Gentiles, which have not the law* Rom. 2. 14.
doe by nature the things contained in the law, which shewes the worke of
the law written in their hearts. And that we may see, it was the law of
 nature, that returned in the fancies of Christianity; GOD declares
 that in the constitution of this law he would take no other course than at
 first, that is, he would write them in the hearts of men: indeed with a
 new style, with a quill taken from the wings of the holy Dove; the spirit
 of GOD was to be the greater engraver, and the scribe of the new Co-
 venant, but the hearts of men should be the tables. *For this is the Cove-*
nant that I will make with them after those dayes saith the LORD, I will put Heb. 10. 16. 17
my lawes into their hearts, and into their minds will I write them, and their sins
and their iniquities will I remember no more. That is I will provide a meanes
 to expiate all the iniquities of man and restore him to the condition of his
 first creation, putting him into the same order towards felicity, which
 I first designed to him, and that also by the same instruments. Now
 I consider, that the spirit of GOD tooke very great care, that all the re-
 cords of the law of JESUS should be carefully kept and transmitted to po-
 sterity in bookes and Sermons, which being an act of providence and mer-
 cy, was a provision, least they should be lost or mistaken as they were
 formerly, when GOD writ some of them in tables of stone for the use of
 the sons of Israel, and all of them in the first tables of nature with the fin-
 ger of creation, as now he did in the new creature by the finger of the spirit.
 But then writing them in the tables of our minds besides the other, can
 meane nothing, but placing them there, where they were before, and
 from whence we blotted them by the mixtures of impure principles
 and discourses. But I descend to particular and more minute considera-
 tions.

The lawes of Nature either are bands of religion, Justice, or sobrie-
 ty. Now I consider concerning religion, that when ever GOD hath made
 any particular precepts to a family, as to *Abrahams*, or to a single person
 as to the Man of Judah prophesying against the altar of Bethel, or to a Na-
 tion as to the Jewes at Sinai, or to all mankind, as to the world descending
 from *Noah*, it was nothing else but a triall or an instance of our obedience, a
 particular prosecution of the Law of nature whereby we are obliged to doe
 honour to GOD, which was to be done by such expressions, which are
 naturall entercourses between GOD and us, or such as he hath made to be
 so. Now in Christianity we are wholly left to that manner of prosecut-
 ing this first naturall law, which is naturall and proportionable to the na-
 ture of the thing, which the holy JESUS calls *worshipping GOD in spirit and*
truth; In spirit] that is with our selves, heartily and devoutly, so as to ex-
 clude hypocrisy and indifferency. And *in truth*] that is, without a lye,
 without vaine imaginations and phantasticke resemblances of him, which
 were introduced by the evill customes of the Gentiles; and without such
 false guises and absurd undecencies, which as they are contrary to mans rea-
 son, so are they contray to the glory and reputation of GOD, such as was
 that uniuersall custome of all nations of sacrificing in mans blood, and of-
 fering festiual lusts and impurities in the solemnities of their religion; for
 these being against the purpose and designe of GOD, and against right

d

zealon

36.

Polyd. Virg. de
invent. l. 8. c. 8.

reason are a lye, and enemies to the truth of a naturall and proper religion. The holy JESUS onely commanded us to pray often, and to praise GOD, to speake honour of his name, not to use it lightly and vainly, to believe him, to revere the instruments and ministers of religion, to aske for what wee need, to put our trust in GOD, to worship him, to obey him, and to love him; for all these are but the expressions of love. And this is all CHRIST spake concerning the first naturall law, the law of religion. For concerning the ceremonies or Sacraments, which he instituted, they are but few, and they become matter of duty but by accident as being instruments and rites of consigning those effects and mercies, which GOD sent to the world by the means of this law, and relate rather to the contract and stipulation, which CHRIST made for us, then to the naturall order between duty and felicity.

31.

Now all these are nothing but what we are taught by naturall reason, that is, what GOD enabled us to understand to be fit instruments of intercourse between GOD and us, and what was practised and taught by sobre men in all ages and all nations, whose records we have received (as I shall remarke at the Margent of the severall precepts) For to make these appeare certainly and naturally necessary there was no more requisite, but that man should know there was a GOD, that is, an eternall being, which gave him all that he had or was, and to know what himselfe was, that is, indigent and necessitous of himselfe, needing helpe of all the Creatures, exposed to accidents and calamity, and defensible no wayes but by the same hand that made him, Creation and conservation in the philosophy of all the world being but the same act continuing and flowing on from an instant to duration, as a line from its Mathematicall point. And for this, GOD tooke sufficient care, for he conversed with man in the very first, in such cleare and certaine and preceptible transaction, that a man could as certainly know, that GOD was, as that Man was. And in all ages of the world he hath not left himselfe without witness, but gave such testimonies of himselfe, that were sufficient, for they did actually persuade all nations barbarous and civill into the believe of a GOD. And it is but a nicety to consider, whether or no that proposition can be naturally demonstrated. For it was sufficient to all GODS purposes and to all Mans, that the proposition was actually beleived; the instances were therefore sufficient to make faith because they did it. And a man may remove himselfe so farre from all the degrees of aptnesse to believe a proposition, that nothing shall make them joyne. For if there were a sect of witty men, that durst not believe their senses, because they thought them fallible; it is no wonder if some men should thinke every reason, reproveable. But in such cases, Demonstration is a relative terme and signifies every probation greater or lesser which does actually make faith in any proposition; and in this, GOD hath never been deficient, but hath to all men, that believe him, given sufficient to confirme them, to those few that believed not, sufficient to reprove them.

Maxim. Tyr.
Dysert. τὸ μὴ εἶναι
ἐκείνου δι' αὐτὸν, καὶ
ἐκείνου δι' αὐτὸν, καὶ
καὶ ἐκείνου δι' αὐτὸν,
καὶ ἐκείνου δι' αὐτὸν,
καὶ ἐκείνου δι' αὐτὸν,
καὶ ἐκείνου δι' αὐτὸν.

32.

Now in all these actions of religion, which are naturally consequent to this believe, there is no scruple, but in the instance, of faith which is presented to be an infused grace, an immission from GOD and that for

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its object it hath supernaturall, that is, principles naturally incredible; and therefore Faith is supposed a grace above the greatest strength of reason. But in this I consider, that if we looke into all the Sermons *apud Laſam.* of CHRIST, we shall not easily find any doctrine, that in any sense *l. 7. c. 23.* troubles naturall philosophy, but onely that of the resurrection (for I doe not thinke those mysticall expressions of plaine truths, such as are [*being borne againe, eating the flesh of the Son of man, being in the Father, and the Father in him*] to be exceptions in this assertion) and although some Gentiles did believe and deliver that article, and particularly *Chrysippus*, and the *Thracians* (as *Mela* and *Solinus* report of them) yet they could not naturally discourse themselves into *l. 2. de Thra-* it, but had it from the imperfect report, and opinion of some Jewes *cib. c. 10.* that dwelt among them; And it was certainly a revelation or a proposition sent into the world by GOD. But then the believing it, is so farre from being above or against nature, that there is nothing in the world more reasonable than to believe any thing which GOD tells us, or which is told us by a man sent from GOD with mighty demonstration of his power and veracity. Naturally our bodies cannot rise, that is, there is no naturall agent or naturall cause sufficient to produce that effect. But this is an effect of a divine power, and he hath but a little stocke of naturall reason, who cannot conclude that the same power, which made us out of nothing, can also restore us to the same condition, as well and easily from dust and ashes certainly, as from meere nothing. And in this and in all the like cases, Faith is a submission of the understanding to the word of GOD, and is nothing else but a confessing that GOD is truth, and that he is omnipotent, that is, he can doe what he will, and he will when he hath once said it. And we are now as ignorant of the essence and nature of formes, and of that which substantially distinguishes Man from Man, or an Angel from an Angel as we were of the greatest article of our religion before it was revealed, and we shall remaine ignorant for ever of many naturall things, unlesse they be revealed; and unlesse we knew all the secrets of Philosophy, the mysteries of nature, and the rules and propositions of all things and creatures, we are fooles, if we say, that what we call an article of faith, I meane truly such, is against naturall reason. It may be indeed as much against our naturall reasonings, as those reasonings are against truth. But if we remember how great an ignorance dwells upon us all, it will be found the most reasonable thing in the world onely to enquire, whether GOD hath revealed any such proposition, and then not to say it is against naturall reason, and therefore an article of faith, but I am told a truth, which I knew not till now, and so my reason is become instructed into a new proposition. And although CHRIST hath given us no new morall precepts, but such which were essentially and naturally reasonable in order to the end of mans creation, yet we may easily suppose him to teach us many a new truth, which we knew not, and to explicate to us many particulars of that estate, which GOD designed for man in his first production, but yet did not then declare to him; and to furnish him with new revelations, and to signifie the greatnesse of the designed end, to become so

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many arguments of indecrements to secure his duty, that is, indeed to secure his happinesse by the infallible using the instruments of attaining it.

33.

This is all I am to say concerning the precept of religion JESUS taught us; he tooke off those many superinduced rites, which GOD enjoyned to the Jewes, and reduced us to the naturall religion, that is, to such expressions of duty, which all wise men and nations used, save onely that he tooke away the rite of sacrificing; because that was either brought into religion by convenience, or by tradition, and it was now determined in the great sacrifice, which sufficiently and eternally reconciled all the world to GOD. All the other things, as prayers and adoration, and Eucharist, and Faith in GOD, are of a naturall order and an unalterable expression; And in the nature of the thing there is no other way of addressse to GOD then these; no other expression of *his glories* and *our needs*; both which must for ever be signified.

*Iust. Mart.
resp. ad Origo-
dox. ad qu. 83.
Tertull. adv.
Marcion. 2. 2.
Maimon. Mo-
reb. Nevochim.
l. 3. c. 32.*

34.

2. Concerning the second naturall precept, Christian religion hath also added nothing beyond the first obligation, but explained it all. * *Whatso-
ever ye would men should doe to you, doe ye so to them*, that is the eternall rule of justice; and that bindes contracts, keepes promises, affirms truth, makes subjects obedient, and Princes just; It gives security to Marts and banks, and introduces an equality of condition upon all the world, save only, when an inequality is necessary, that is, in the relations of government, for the preservation of the common rights of equall titles and possessions, that there be some common terme indued with power, who is to be the Father of all men by an equall provision, that every mans rights be secured by that seare, which naturally we shall beare to him, who can and will punish all unreasonable and unjust violations of property. And concerning this also the holy JESUS hath added an expresse precept, of paying tribute, and all *Cæsars* dues to *Cæsar*: in all other particulars it is necessary, that the instances and minutes of justice be appointed by the Lawes and customes of the severall Kingdomes and republickes. And therefore it was that Christianity so well combinde with the Government of Heathen Princes, because whatsoever was naturally just, or declared so by the Political power, their religion bound them to observe, making obedience to be a double duty, a duty both of justice and religion: And the societies of Christians growing up from Conventicles to Assemblies, from Assemblies to Societies introduced no change in the Government, but by little and little turned the Common-wealth into a Church, till the world being Christian, and justice also being religion, obedience to Princes, observation of Lawes, honesty in contracts, and faithfulness in promises, and gratitude to benefactors, and simplicity in discourse, and ingenuity in all pretences and transactions became the Characteristmes of Christian Men, and the *Word of a Christian*, the greatest solemnity of stipulation in the world.

** Hac sententia
sapissime a Se-
vero Imperato-
re prolata.
O paxis iustis
ni mabus. Tob.
4. 16.
Dixit Mimms.
Ab alio expe-
ctes alteri quod
feceris.
Singulorum in-
terest, si uni-
versi regantur.*

35.

But concerning the generall, I consider, that in two very great instances it was remonstrated, that Christianity was the greatest prosecution of naturall justice and equality in the whole world. The one was in an election of an Apostle into the place of Judas, when there:

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there were two equall candidates of the same pretension and capacity; the Question was determin'd by lots, which naturally was the arbitration in Questions, whose parts were wholly indifferent; and as it was used in all times, so it is to this day used with us in many places where least there be a disagreement concerning the manner of tithing some creatures, and to prevent unequall arts and unjust practises, they are tithed by lot, and their fortuitous passing through the doore of their fold. The other is in the Cœnobiticke life of the first Christians and Apostles, they had all things in common, which was that state of nature, in which men lived charitably and without injustice, before the distinction of dominions and private rights. But from this manner of life they were soone driven by the publike necessity and constitution of affaires.

3. Whatsoever else is in the Christian Law, concerne the naturall precept of sobriety, in which there is some variety and some difficulty. In the matter of carnality the holy JESUS did cleerely reduce us to the first institution of marriage in Paradise, allowing no other mixture but what was first intended in the creation, and first sacramental union; and in the instance he so permitted us to the naturall law, that he was pleased to mention no instance of forbidden lust, but in generall and comprehensive termes of *adultery* and *fornication*; in the other, which are still more unnaturall, as their names are concealed and hidden in shame and secrecy, we are to have no instructor but the modesty and order of nature.

As an instance of this Law of sobriety, CHRIST superadded the whole doctrine of *humility*, which *Moses* did not, and which seemed almost to be extinguished in the world; and it is called by Saint *Paul*, *sapere ad sobrietatem*, the reasonableness or *wisdom* of sobriety. And it is all the reason of the world, that a man should thinke of himselfe but just as he is. He is deceived that thinkes otherwise, and is a foole; And when we consider that pride makes warres, and causes affronts, and no man loves a proud man, and he loves no man but himselfe, we shall understand that the precept of humility is an excellent art, and a happy instrument towards humane felicity. And it is no way contradicted by a naturall desire of honour; it onely appoints just and reasonable wayes of obtaining it. Wee are not forbidden to receive honour; but to seeke it for desires of pride and complacency, or to make it rest in our hearts. But when the hand of vertue receives the honour, and transmits it to GOD from our own head, the desires of nature are sufficiently satisfied, and nothing of religion contradicted. And it is certain by all the experience of the world, that in every state and order of men, he that is most humble in proportion to that state, is (if all things else be symbollicall) the most honoured person. For it is very observable, that when GOD designed man to a good and happy life, as the naturall end of his creation, to verifie this, GOD was pleased to give him objects *sufficient* and *apt* to satisfy every appetite; I say to satisfy it naturally, not to satisfy those extravagancies, which might be accident-

d 5

all

Vina sunt se-
dant, natis ve-
nus Alma cre-
andiserviat,
horfines tran-
silisse nocet
Ving.
O murtis vifp-
'Bud, is dūm
vbi idim, i
xnd' vifpūdi,
i dūm vifpū-
pūm, i pū di
'vūm, xū pū
di vifpū vū-
fūm, 'vūm
59-Arist. E-
thic. l. 7. c. 7.

all and procured by the irregularity either of will or understandings, not to answer him in all that his desires could extend to, but to satisfie the necessity of every appetite; all the desires that GOD made, not all that man should make. For we see even in those appetites, which are common to men and beasts, all the needs of nature, and all the ends of creation are served by the taking such proportions of their objects, which are ordinate to their end, and which in man we call temperance, (not as much as they naturally can,) such as are mixtures of sexes meely for production of their kinde; eating and drinking for needs and hunger; and yet GOD permitted our appetites to bee able to extend beyond the limits of the meere naturall designe, that GOD by restraining them, and putting the fetters of Lawes upon them might turne naturall desires into sobriety, and sobriety into Religion, they becoming servants of the Commandment. And now wee must not call all those swellings of appetites, naturall inclination, nor the satisfaction of such tumours and excrecencies any part of naturall felicities: but that which does just cooperate to those ends, which perfect humane nature in order to its proper end. For the appetites of meat and drink, and pleasures, are but intermediall and instrumentall to the end, and are not made for themselves, but first for the end, and then to serve GOD in the instances of obedience. And just so is the naturall desire of honour; intended to bee a spur to vertue (for to vertue onely it is naturally consequent or to naturall and politicall superiority) but to desire it beyond, or besides the limit, is the swelling and the disease of the desire. And we can take no rule for its perfect value, but by the strict limits of the naturall end, or the superinduced end of Religion in positive restraints.

38.

According to this discourse we may best understand, that even the severest precepts of the Christian Law are very consonant to nature, and the first lawes of mankind. Such is the precept of *self-deniall*, which is nothing else but a confining the appetites within the limits of nature: for there they are permitted, (except when some greater purpose is to bee served than the present answering the particular desire) and whatsoever is beyond it, is not in the naturall order to felicity; it is no better than an itch, which must be scratched and satisfied, but it is unnaturall. But for Martyrdome it selfe, quitting our goods, loosing lands, or any temporall interest, they are now become as reasonable in the present constitution of the world, as taking unpleasant potions, and suffering a member to be cauterized, in sicknesse or disease. And we see that death is naturally a lesse evil then a continuall torment, and by some not so resented as a great disgrace; and some persons have chosen it for sanctuary and remedy; And therefore much rather shall it be accounted prudent and reasonable and agreeable to the most perfect desires of nature, to exchange a house for a hundred, a Friend for a Patron, a short affliction for a lasting joy, and a temporall death for an eternall life. For so the question is stated to us by him that understands it best. True it is, that the suffering of losses, afflictions, and death, is naturally an evil, and therefore no part of a naturall precept, or prime injunction. But when GOD having commanded

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ded instances of Religion, man will not suffer us to obey GOD, or will not suffer us to live, then the question is, which is most agreeable to the most perfect and reasonable desires of nature, to obey GOD, or to obey man, to feare GOD, or to feare man, to preserve our bodies, or to preserve our soules, to secure a few yeares of uncertaine and troublesome duration, or an eternitie of a very glorious condition? Some men reasonably enough choose to die for considerations lower then that of a happy eternitie; therefore death is not such an evill but that it may in some cases be desired and reasonably chosen, and in some be recompensed at the highest rate of a naturall value; And if by accident we happen into an estate, in which of necessity one evill or another must be suffered, certainly nothing is more naturally reasonable and eligible, then to choose *the least evill*: and when there are two good things propounded to our choyce, both which cannot be possessed, nothing is more certainly the object of a prudent choyce, then *the greater good*. And therefore, when once we understand the question of suffering, and self-denyall, and Martyrdome to this sense, as all Christians doe, and all wise men doe, and all sects of men doe in their severall persuasions, it is but remembering, that to live happily after this life is more intended to us by GOD, and is more perfective of humane nature, then to live here with all the prosperity which this state affords; and it will evidently follow, that when violent men will not let us enter into that condition by the wayes of Nature and prime intendment, that is, of naturall Religion, justice, and sobriety, it is made in that case, and upon that supposition, certainly, naturally, and infallibly reasonable to secure the perfective and principle designe of our felicity, though it be by such instruments, which are as unpleasant to our senses as are the instruments of our restitution to health; since both one and the other in the present conjunction and state of affaires are most proportionable to reason, because they are so to the present necessity, not primarily intended to us by GOD, but superinduced by evill accident, and the violence of men. And we not onely finde that *Socrates* suffered death in attestation of a GOD, though he flattered and discoursed himselfe into the beliefe of an immortall reward; *De industria consulta aequanimitatis, non de fiducia comperta veritatis* (as *Tertullian* sayes of him) but we also finde, that all men, that believed the immortality of the soule firmly and unmoveably, made no scruple of exchanging their life for the preservation of vertue with the interest of their great hope, for honour sometimes, and oftentimes for their Countrey.

Thus the holy JESUS perfected and restored the naturall Law, and drew it into a systeme of propositions, and made them to become of the family of Religion. For GOD is so zealous to have man attaine to the end, to which he first designed him, that those things which he hath put in the naturall order to attaine that end he hath bound fast upon us, not only by the order of things by which it was that he that prevaricated did naturally fall short of felicity; but also by bands of Religion: he hath now made himself a party and an enemy to those that will be not happy. Of old; Religion was but one of the naturall Lawes, and the influences of Religion were distinct from the discourses of philosophy. Now all the law of nature is adopted into religion, and by our love and duty to GOD we are

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tyed to doe all that is reason; and the parts of our religion are but pur-
suances of the naturall relation between GOD and us; and beyond all
this, our naturall condition is in all senses improved by the consequents
and adherencies of this religion: For although nature and grace are op-
posite, that is, nature depraved by evil habits, by ignorance and un-
godly customes is contrary to grace, that is, to nature restored by the
Gospel, engaged to regular living by new revelations, and assisted by the
Spirit, yet it is observable, that the *Law of Nature*, and the *Law of grace*
are never opposed. *There is a Law of our members* (saith Saint Paul)
that is, an evil necessity introduced into our appetites by perpetuall
evil customes, examples, and traditions of vanity, and *there is a law*
of sinne that answers to this, and they differ onely, as inclination and
habit, vicious desires, and vicious practices. But then contrary to these
are, first a *law of my minde*, which is, the *law of Nature* and right reason,
and then the *law of Grace*, that is, of JESUS CHRIST, who perfected and re-
stored the first Law, and by assistances reduced it into a Law of holy
living; and these two differ as the other, the one is in order to the
other, as imperfection and growing degrees and capacities are to perfection
and consummation. The Law of the mind had been so raised and obliterate,
and we by some means or other so disabled from observing it exactly, that
untill it was turned into the *law of grace* (which is a law of pardoning in-
firmities, and assisting us in our choices and elections) we were in a state of de-
ficiency from the perfective state of man, to which GOD intended us.

Now although GOD always designed man to the same state, which he
hath now revealed by JESUS CHRIST, yet he told him not of it, and
his permissions and licences were then greater, and the Law it selfe lay clo-
ser folded up in the compact body of necessary propositions in order to so
much of his end as was known, or could be supposed. But now according
to the extension of the revelation, the Law it selfe is made wider, that is,
more explicit; and naturall reason is thrust forward into discourses of
charity and benefit, and we tyed to do very much good to others, and tyed
to cooperate to each others felicity.

That the Law of charity is a law of nature, needs no other argument but
the consideration of the first constitution of man. The first instances of ju-
stice or intercourse of man with a second or third person, was to such per-
sons, towards whom he had the greatest endearments of affection in the
world, a wife, and children; and justice and charity at first was the same
thing. And it hath obtained in ages farre removed from the first, that cha-
rity is called *righteousnesse*, *He hath dispersed and given to the poore, his righte-
ousnesse remaineth for ever*. And it is certaine, Adam could not in any in-
stance be unjust, but he must in the same also be uncharitable; the band
of his first justice being the ties of love, and all having commenced in love.
And our blessed Lord restoring all to the intention of the first perfection
expresses it to the same sense as I formerly observed; Justice to our Neigh-
bour is, *loving him as our selves*: For since justice obliges us to do as wee
would be done to, as the irascible faculty restraines us from doing evil
for feare of receiving evil: So the concupiscible obliges us to charity, that our
selves may receive good.

I shall say nothing concerning the reasonableness of this precept
but that it concurs rarely with the first reasonable appetite of man, of
being

Rom. 7. 23.

Ibid.

40

41

Ὁ ἀδελφεός μου
ἀποστολικὴν τι-
φών. M. Anton.
l. 9.
Psal. 112. 9.

42

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being like GOD. *Deus est mortali juvare mortalem, atque hac est ad eternitatem via*, said *Pliny*: And it is more blessed to give than to receive, (said our blessed SAVIOUR) and therefore the Commandment of charity in all its parts is a designe not only to reconcile the most miserable person to some participations and sense of felicity, but to make the charitable man happy; and whether this be not very agreeable to the desires of an intelligent nature need no further enquiry. And *Aristotle* asking the Question, whether a man had more need of friends in prosperity or adversity makes the case equal; *Ὅτι γὰρ ἀτυχῆστες διότις ἀγαθῶν ἐστὶν ἔλλειψις, καὶ εὐτυχῆστες διότις κακῶν ἐστὶν ἔλλειψις*. "When they are in want they need assistance, when they are prosperous, they need partners of their felicity, that by communicating their joy to them it may reflect and double upon their spirits. And certaine it is, there is no greater felicity in the world, then in the content that results from the emanations of charity. And this is that which Saint *John* calls, the old Commandment, and the new Commandment. It was of old, for it was from the beginning, even in nature, and to the offices of which our very bodies had an organ and a seate. For therefore nature gave to a man bowells and the passion of yerning; but it grew up into religion by parts, and was made perfect, and in that degree appropriate to the Law of JESUS CHRIST. For so the holy JESUS became our Law-giver, and added many new precepts over and above what were in the Law of *Moses*, but not more then was in the Law of nature. The reason of both is what I have all this while discoursed of. CHRIST made a more perfect restitution of the Law of *Magnificum* nature then *Moses* did, and so it became the second *Adam* to consume that, which began to be lesse perfect from the prevarication of the first *Adam*.

A particular of the precept of charity is forgiving injuries, and besides that it hath many superinduced benefits by way of blessing and reward, it relies also upon this naturall reason; that a pure and a simple revenge does no way restore man towards the felicity, which the injury did interrupt. For revenge is a doing a simple evill, and does not in its formality imply reparation; for the meere repeating of my own right is permitted to them that will doe it by charitable instruments; and to secure my selfe, or the publike, against the future, by positive inflictions upon the injurious (if I be not Judge my selfe) is also within the moderation of an unblameable defence (unlesse some accident or circumstances vary the case) but forgiving injuries is a separating the malice from the wrong, the transient act from the permanent effect; and it is certaine, the act which is passed cannot be rescinded, the effect may; and if it cannot, it does no way alleviate the evill of the accident, that I draw him that caused it into as great a misery, since every evill happening in the world is the proper object of pity, which is in some sense afflictive; and therefore unlesse we become unnatural and without bowells, it is most unreasonable that we should encrease our own afflictions by introducing a new misery, and making a new object of pity. All the ends of humane felicity are secured without

*ἡ ἀρετὴ τῆς ἀφ᾽ ἑαυτοῦ
καὶ τῶν ἄλλων εὐτυχία
καὶ τῆς ἀφ᾽ ἑαυτοῦ
καὶ τῶν ἄλλων εὐτυχία
καὶ τῆς ἀφ᾽ ἑαυτοῦ
καὶ τῶν ἄλλων εὐτυχία
1. ep. Joan. 2
7, 8.
— Hoc Re-
ges habent
Magnificum
ingens, nulla
quod rapiat dies
Prodesse mise-
ris, supplices fi-
do late Prose-
gere — Se-
nec. Med.
43.*

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45.

I shall adde nothing; but this single consideration. GOD said to the children of Israel, *ye are a Royall Priesthood, a Kingdome of Priests.* Which was therefore true, because GOD reigned by the Priests, and the Priests *lips did then preserve knowledge*, and the people were *so* to receive the Law from their mouths, that GOD having by Lawes of his own established religion and the republike, did govern by the rule of the Law, and the ministry of the Priests. The Priests said, *thus saith the LORD*, and the people obeyed. And these very words are spoken to the Christian Church; *Tee are a Royall Priesthood, an holy Nation, a peculiar people, that yee should shew forth the praises of him that hath called you out of darknesse into his merveilous light.* That is, GOD reignes over all Christendome just as he did over the Jewes. He hath now so given to them and restored respectively all those reasonable Lawes, which are in order to all good ends person all, Oeconomically and politicall, that if men will suffer Christian religion to doe its last intention, if man will live according to it, there needs no other coercion of Lawes, or power of the Sword. The Lawes of God revealed by Christ are sufficient to make all societies of men happy; and over all good men God reignes by his Ministers, by the preaching of the word: And this was most evident in the three first ages of the Church, in which all Christian Societies were for all their proper entercomfes perfectly guided, not by the authority and compulsion, but by the Sermons of their Spirituall Guides; insomuch, that Saint Paul sharply reprehends the Corinthians, that Brother goeth to Law with Brother, and that before the unbelievers; as if hee sayd, yee will not suffer CHRIST to bee your Judge, and his Law to bee your rule; which indeed was a great fault among them, not onely because they had so excellent a Law, so clearly described, (or where they they might doubt, they had infallible interpreters) so reasonable and profitable, so evidently concurring to their mutuall felicity, but also because GOD did designe JESUS to bee their King, to reigne over them by Spirituall regiment, as himselfe did over the Jewes, till they chose a King. And when the Emperours became Christian, the case was no otherwise altered, but that the Princes themselves submitting to CHRISTs yoake, were (as all other Christians are) for their proportion to bee governed by the Royall Priesthood, that is, by the Word preached by Apostolicall persons, the politicall interest remaining as before, save that by being submitted to the Lawes of CHRIST it received this advantage, that all justice was turned to bee Religion, and became necessary, and bound upon the conscience by Divinity. And when it happens that a Kingdome is converted to Christianity, the Common-wealth is made a Church, and Gentile Priests are Christian Bishops, and the Subjects of the Kingdome are Servants of CHRIST, the Religion of the Nation is turned Christian, and the Law of the Nation made a part of the Religion; there is no change of Government, but that CHRIST is made King, and the Temporall Power is his Substitute, and is to promote the interest of obedience to him, as before hee did to CHRISTs enemy; CHRIST having left his Ministers

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sters as *Liege Ambassadors*, to signify and publish the Lawes of JESUS, to pray all in *CHRISTS* stead to be reconciled to GOD: so that, over the obedient CHRIST wholly reignes by his Ministers, publishing his Lawes, over the disobedient, by the Prince also, putting those Lawes in execution. And in this sense it is that Saint Paul sayes, *Bona lex non est posita*, To such (who live after the Spirit) there is no Law, that is, there needs no coercion. But now if wee reject GOD from reigning over us, and say like the people in the Gospel, *Noluitis hunc regnare*, we will not have him to reigne over us, by the Ministry of his Word, by the Empire of the Royall Priesthood, then we returne to the condition of Heathens, and persons sitting in darknesse, then GOD hath armed the Temporall Power with a sword to cut us off. If wee obey not GOD, speaking by his Ministers, that is, if we live not according to the excellent Lawes of Christianity, that is, *holily, soberly*, and *justly* in all our relations, he hath placed three swords against us, the *Sword of the SPIRIT* against the unholy and irreligious; the *sword of naturall and supervening infelicities* upon the intemperate and unsober; and the *Sword of Kings* against the unjust; to remonstrate the excellencie of Christianity, and how certainly it leades to all the felicitie of man, because every transgression of this Law, according to its proportion makes men unhappy and unfortunate.

46.

Phil. 4. 2.

What effect this Discourse may have, I know not, I intended it to doe honour to Christianity, and to represent it to bee the best Religion in the World, and the conjugation of all excellent things that were in any Religion, or in any Philosophy, or in any Discourses. For *whatsoever was honest*, whatsoever was noble, *whatsoever was wise*, *whatsoever was of good report*, if there bee any praise, if there bee any virtue, it is in Christianity. For even to follow all these instances of excellency, is a Precept of Christianity. And me thinks they that pretend to reason, cannot more reasonably endear themselves to the reputation of reason, then by endearing their reason to Christianity; the conclusions and believe of which is the most reasonable and perfect, the most excellent designe and complying with the noblest and most proper ends of man. And if this gate may suffice to invite such persons into the recesses of the Religion, then I shall tell them, that I have dressed it in the ensuing Bookes with some variety; and as the nature of the Religion is, some parts whereof are apt to satisfie our discourse, some to move our affections, and yet all of this to relate to practise: So is the designe of the following pages. For some men are wholly made up of passion, and their very Religion is but Passion put into the Family and Society of holy purposes: And for those I have prepared considerations upon the speciall parts of the life of the Holy JESUS, and yet there also are some things mingled in the least severe and most affectionate parts which may helpe to answer a Question and appease a scruple, and may give Rule for DETERMINATION of many cases of CONSCIENCE. For I have so ordered the considerations, that

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that they spend not themselves in meere affections, and ineffective passions, but they are made doctrinall and little repositories of duty: But because of the variety of mens spirits, and of mens necessities, it was necessary I should interpose some practicall discourses more severe; For it is but a sad thought to consider that piety and bookes of devotion are counted but entertainment for little understandings, and softer spirits; and although there is much fault in such Imperious minds, that they will not distinguish the weaknesse of the writers from the reasonablenesse and wisdom of the religion: yet I cannot but thinke, the bookes themselves are in a large degree the occasion of so great indevotion: because they are (some few excepted) represented naked in the conclusions of spirituall life without or art or learning, and made apt for persons, who can doe nothing but believe and love, not for them, that can consider and love. And it is not well, that since nothing is more reasonable and excellent in all perfections spirituall than the doctrines of the spirit or holy life, yet nothing is offered to us, unlearnedly as this is, so miserable and empty of all its own intellectuall perfections. If I could I would have had it otherwise in the present bookes: For since the understanding is not an idle faculty in a spirituall life, but hugely operative to all excellent and reasonable choices, it were very fit that this faculty were also entertained by such discourses which GOD intended, as instruments of hallowing it, as he intended it towards the sanctification of the whole man. For want of it, buisy and active men entertaine themselves with notions infinitely unsatisfying and unprofitable: But in the meane time they are not so wise. For concerning those, that study unprofitable notions, and neglect not onely that, which is wisest, but that also, which is of most reall advantage, I cannot but thinke as *Aristotle* did of *Thales* and

Anaxagoras, that they may be learned, but they are "not wise, or wise but not prudent, when they are "ignorant of such things, as are profitable to them. "For suppose they know the wonders of nature, and "the sublimities of Metaphysickes, and operations "Mathematicall, yet they cannot be prudent, who "spend themselves wholly upon unprofitable and in- "effective contemplations. He is truly wise, that knows best to promote the best end, that which he is bound to desire, and is happy, if he obtaines, and miserable if he misses, and that is the end of a happy eternity: which is obtained by the onely meanes of living according to the purposes of GOD and the prime intentions of nature; naturall and prime reason being now all one with the Christian religion. But then I shall onely observe that this part of wisdom, and the excellency of its secret and deep reason is not to be discerned, but by experience: the propositions of this philosophy being, (as in many other) Empiricall and best found out by observation of reall and materiall events. So that I may say of spirituall learning, as *Quintilian* said of some

ὁ δὲ Ἀναξαγόρας καὶ Θάλης καὶ τὰς
τοιαύτας οὐδὲ μὴν, οὐκ αἰσίου ἢ
ἐκείνῳ αἰσίου, ὅταν ἰδῶμεν ἀνθρώ-
που τὰ κοινὰ καὶ τὰ ἀσυνήθιστα ἀπορίῃ, καὶ τὰ
ἐκείνῳ μόνον, καὶ ὁμοιωμένη, καὶ κα-
ταστά καὶ διακρίνειν οὐκ αἰσίου οὐδὲ πα-
ρὰ, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἢ τὸ καὶ τὸ ἀπορίῃ-
ον, καὶ τὰ ἄλλα. *Aristot.* l. 6.
Eth. cap. 7.

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of Platoes bookes. Nam Plato cum in alijs quibusdam, tum precipue in *Timeo* ne intelligi quidem nisi ab ijs qui banc quoque partem disciplina [Musica] diligenter perceperint, potest. The secrets of the kingdome of heaven are not understood truly and thoroughly but by the sons of the kingdome, and by them too in severall degrees, and to various purposes; but to evill persons the whole systeme of this wisdom is insipid and flatt, dull as the foot of a rocke, and unlearned as the elements of our mother tongue. But so are Mathematickes to a Scythian boore, and Musicke to a Camel.

47.

But I consider that the wisest persons, and those who know how to value and entertaine the more noble faculties of their soule, and their precious houres, take more pleasure in reading the productions of those old wise spirits, who preserved naturall reason and religion in the midst of heathen darkeness (such as are *Homer*, *Euripides*, *Orpheus*, *Pindar*, and *Anacreon*, *Æschylus* and *Menander*, and all the Greeke Poets: *Plutarch* and *Polybius*, *Xenophon* and all those other excellent persons of both faculties (whose choicest dictates are collected by *Stobæus*) *Plato* and his Schollers, *Aristotle* and after him *Porphiry*, and all his other Disciples, *Pythagoras* and his, especially *Hierocles*: all the old Academickes and Stoicks within the Roman Schooles) more pleasure I say in reading these then the triflings of many of the later Schoolmen, who promoted a petty interest of a family, or an unlearned opinion with great earnestnesse, but added nothing to Christianity, but trouble, scruple and vexation. And from hence I hope, that they may the rather be invited to love and consider the rare decumments of Christianity, which certainly is the great treasure house of those excellent, morall and perfective discourses, which with much paines and greater pleasure we find respered and thinly scattered in all the Greeke and Roman Poets, Historians, and Philosophers.

But because I have observed, that there are some principles entertained into the persuasions of men, which are the seeds of evill life, such as are, the doctrine of late repentance; the mistakes of the definition of the sins of infirmity; the evill understanding the consequents and nature of originall sinne; the sufficiency of contrition in order to pardon, the efficacy of the rites of Christianity without the necessity of morall adherencies; the nature of faith; and many other, I was diligent to remarke such doctrines, and to pare off the mistakes so farre, that they hinder not piety, and yet as neere as I could without engaging in any Question, in which the very life of Christianity is not concerned.

"Hæc sum profatus---haud ambagibus

"Implicita, sed qua regulis æqui et boni

"Suffulta, rudibus pariter et doctis parent.

*Polynic. apud
Eurip.*

48.

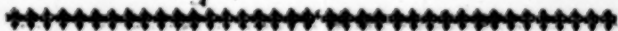
My great purpose is to advance the necessity, and to declare the manner and parts of a good life, and to invite some persons to the consideration of all the parts of it by internixing something of pleasure with the use: others by such parts, which will better entertaine their spirits than a *Romance*. I have followed the designe of Scripture, and

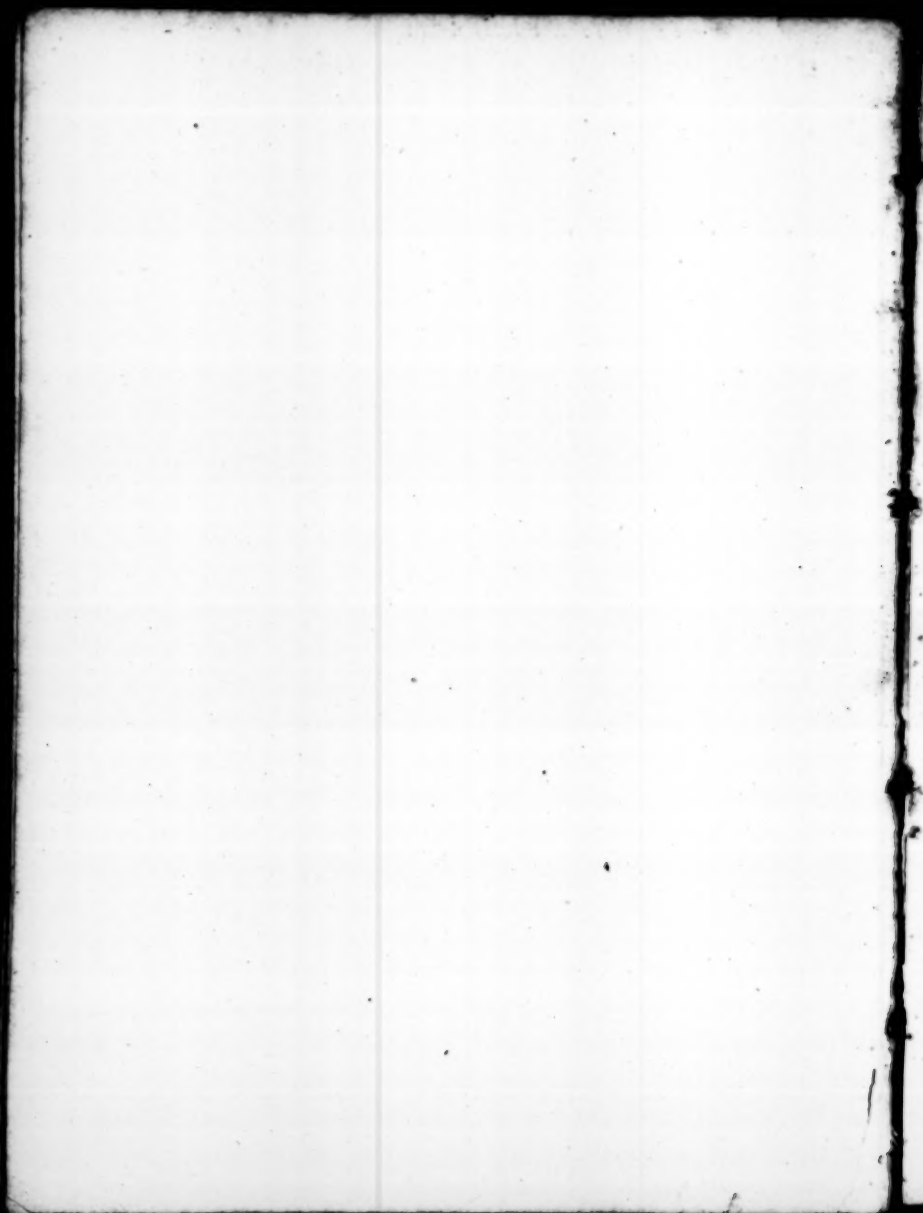
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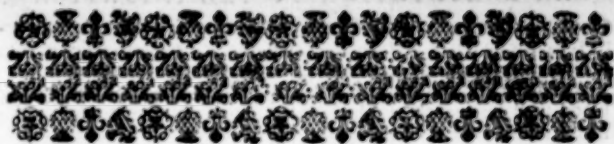
and have given milke for babes, and for stronger men stronger meat; and in all I have despised my owne reputation by so striving to make it usefull, that I was lesse carefull to make it strict in retired senses, and embossed with unneccessary, but gracefull ornaments. I pray G O D this may goe forth into a blessing to all that shall use it, and richest blessings upon mee all the way, that my spark may grow greater by kindling my brothers Taper, and G O D may bee glorified in us both. If the Reader shall receive no benefit, yet I intended him one, and I have laboured in order to it, and I shall receive a great recompence for that intention, if hee shall please to say this prayer for mee, *That while I have preached to others, I may not become a Cast-away.*



AN







AN EXHORTATION TO THE imitation of the Life of CHRIST.



However the person of JESUS CHRIST was depressed with a load of humble accidents, and shadowed with the darkneses of poverty, and sad contingencies, so that the Jews, and the contemporary ages of the Gentiles, and the Apostles themselves could not at first discern the brightest essence of divinity: yet as a Beauty artificially covered with a thin cloud of Cypresse, transmits its excellency to the eye made more greedy and apprehensive, by that imperfect and weak restraint; So was the sanctity and holinesse of the life of JESUS, glorious in its darkneses, and found Confessors and Admirers even in the midst of those despites which were done him upon the contrariant designs of malice, and contradictory ambition. Thus the Wife of *Pilate* called him *that just person*; *Pilate* pronounced him guiltlesse, *Judas* said, he was innocent, the Devil himself called him, *the Holy one of God*. For however it might concern any mans mistaken ends to mislike the purpose of his preaching, and spiritual Kingdom; and those doctrines which were destructive of their complacencies, and carnal securities; yet they could not deny but that he was a man of God, of exemplar sanctity, of an angelicall chastity, of a life sweet, affable, and complying with humane conversation, and as obedient to government as the most humble children of the kingdom. And yet he was Lord of all the World.

And certainly very much of this was with a designe, that he might shine to all the generations and ages of the World, and become a guiding star, and a pillar of fire to us in our journey. For we who believe that JESUS was perfect God, and perfect Man, do also believe that one minure of his intolerable Pasion, and every action of his was satisfactory and meritorious respectively, enough for the expiation and reconciliation of ten thousand worlds: and God might upon a lesse effusion of blood, and a shorter life of merit (if he had pleased) have accepted humane nature to pardon and favour; but, that the holy JESUS hath added so many excellent instances

AN EXHORTATION TO THE IMITATION

ces of holiness, and so many degrees of Passion, and so many kinds of virtues, is, that he might become an example to us, and reconcile our wills to him, as well as our persons to his Heavenly Father.

3. And indeed it will prove but a sad consideration, that one drop of blood shall be enough to obtain our pardon, and the treasures of his blood running out till the fountain it self was dry, shall not be enough to procure our conformity to him: that the smallest minute of his expence shall be enough to justify us, and the whole Magazine shall not procure our Sanctification: that at a smaller expence God might pardon us, and at a greater we will not imitate him: For therefore Christ hath suffered for us (saith the Apostle) leaving an example to us, that we might follow his steps. The least of our wills cost Christ as much, as the greatest of our sins. And therefore he calls himself *the Way, the Truth, and the Life*. That as he redeems our souls from death to life, by becoming life to our Persons, so he is *the truth* to our understandings, and *the way* to our will and affections, enlightning that, and leading these in the paths of a happy Eternity.

4. When the king of Moab was pressed hard by the sons of Isaac, [the Israelites and Edomites,] he took the king of Edoms eldest son; or as some think, his own son, the heir of his kingdom, and offered him as a Holocaust upon the wall, and the Edomites presently raised the siege at *Kirharaseth*, and went to their own country. The same, and much more was Gods designe, who took not his enemies, but his own Son, his onely begotten Son, and God himself, and offered him up in sacrifice, to make us leave our perpetuall fightings against Heaven; and if we still persist, we are hardened beyond the wildnesses of the Arabs and Edomites, and neither are receptive of the impressions of Pity or Humanity: who neither have compassion to the suffering of JESUS, nor compliance with the designs of God, nor conformity to the holiness and obedience of our Guide. In a dark night, if an *Ignis Fatuus* do but precede us, the glaring of its lesser flame does so amuse our eyes, that we follow it into Rivers and Precipices, as if the ray of that false light were designed on purpose to be our path to tread in: And therefore not to follow the glories of the Son of Righteousness, who indeed leads us over rocks and difficult places, but secures us against the danger, and guides us into safety, is the greatest both undecency, and unthankfulness in the world.

5. In the great Councel of Eternity, when God set down the lawes, and knit fast the Eternal bands of Predestination, he made it one of his great purposes to make his Son like us, that we also might be like his holy Son; he, by taking our Nature, we, by imitating his Holiness; God hath predestinated us to be conformable to the image of his Son (saith the Apostle). For the first in every kinde is in Nature propounded as the pattern of the rest; and as the Sun, the Prince of all the Bodies of Light, and the Fire of all warm substances is the principal, the rule and the copy, which they in their proportions imitate, and transcribe: So is the *Word incarnate*, the great example of all the Predestinate; for *he is the first-born among many Brethren*. And therefore it was a precept of the Apostle, and by his Doctrine we understand its meaning; *Put you on the Lord Jesus Christ*. The similitude declares the Duty; as a garment is composed and made of the same

assistance of example which possibly might be too great and scare our endeavours and attempts, but also by way of compliency and proportion. For Jesus in his whole life conversed with men with a modest vertue, which like a well kindled fire fitted with just materials casts a constant heat; not like an inflamed heap of stubble, glaring with great emissions, and suddenly stooping into the thicknesse of smoak. His piety was even, constant, unblameable, complying with civill society, without aught of precedent, or prodigious instances of actions, greater then the imitation of men. For if we observe our blessed Saviour in the whole story of his Life, although he was without sin, yet the instances of his piety were the actions of a very holy, but of an ordinary life; and we may observe this difference in the story of JESUS from Ecclesiastical writings of certain beatisfied persons, whose life is told rather to amaze us, and to create scruples then to lead us in the evennesse, and serenity of a holy Conscience. Such are the prodigious penances of *Simon Stylites*, the abstinence of the religious retired into the mountain Nitria, but especially the stories of later Saints in the midst of a declining piety, and aged Christendom where persons are represented Holy by way of Idea and fancy, if not to promote the interests of a family and institution. But our blessed Saviour thought his eternall union and adherences of love and obedience to his heavenly Father were next to infinite, yet in his externall actions in which onely, with the correspondence of the Spirit in those actions, he propounds himself imitable, he did so converse with men, that men after that example might for ever converse with him. We finde that some Saints have had excrecencies and eruptions of holiness in the instances of uncommanded duties, which in the same particulars we finde not in the story of the life of JESUS. *John Baptist* was a greater mortifyer then his Lord was; and some Princes have given more money then all Christs family did, whilst he was alive; but the difference which is observable is, that although some men did some acts of Counsel in order to attain that perfection which in JESUS was essential and unalterable, and was not acquird by degrees and means, of danger and difficulty; yet no man ever did his whole duty save onely the holy JESUS; the best of men did sometimes actions not precisely and strictly requisite, and such as were besides the duty; but yet in the greatest flames of their shining piety, they prevaricated something of their duty. But JESUS who intended himself the example of piety, did in manners as in the rule of Faith, which because it was propounded to all men was fitted to every understanding; it was true, necessary, short, easy, and intelligible; so was his rule and his copy fitted, not onely with excellencies worthy, but with compliances possible to be imitated; of glories so great that the most early and constant industry must confesse its own imperfections, and yet so sweet and humane, that the greatest infirmity, if pious shall finde comfort and encouragement. Thus God gave his children Manna from heaven, and though it was excellent like the food of Angels, yet it conformed to every palate according to that appetite which their severall fancies and constitutions did produce.

But now when the example of JESUS is so excellent, that it assures and tempts with its facility and sweetnesse, and that we are not commanded to imitate a life, whose stories tells of extracies in prayer, and * abstractions of senses, and immateriall transporations, and fastings to the exanination of spirits

Admonetur omnia
qui in hoc mundo
sunt ut quod est
in mundo sunt, quod
jam est in terra de-
clinetur, S. Gregorius.

9.

* Οὐκ ἐν ἑαυτοῖς
τῷ Θεῷ, ὡς ἡ
ἐκκλησία τοῦ Θεοῦ
ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ
ἐκκλησία ἐστίν.
ἐκκλησία ἐστίν.
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ἐκκλησία ἐστίν.

ἐκκλησία ἐστίν.
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ἐκκλησία ἐστίν.

spirits and disabling all animal operations: but a life of Justice and Temperance, of Chastity and Piety, of Charity and devotion, such a life without which humane society cannot be conserved and by which as our irregularities are made regular, so our weaknesses are not upbraided, nor our miseries made a mockery; we finde so much reason to addressse our selves to a heavenly imitation of so blessed a pattern, that the reasonableness of the thing will be a great argument to chide every degree and minute of neglect. It was a strange and a confident encouragement which *Phocion* used to a timorous Greek who was condemned to die with him; *Is it not enough to thee that thou mayst die with Phocion?* I am sure he that is most incurious of the issues of his life is yet willing enough to reign with JESUS when he looks upon the glories represented without the duty; but it is a very great stupidity and unreasonableness not to live with him in the imitation of so holy and so prompt a piety. It is glorious to do what he did, and a shame to decline his sufferings when there was a God to hallow and sanctifie the actions, and a man clothed with infirmity to undergo the sharpness of the passion, so that the glory of the person added excellency to the first, and the tenderness of the person excused not from suffering the latter.

3. Every action of the life of JESUS, as it is imitable by us, is of so excellent merit, that by making up the treasure of grace, it becomes full of assistances to us and obtains of God grace to enable us to its imitation by way of influence and impetration. For as in the acquisition of habits the very exercise of the action does produce a facility to the action, and in some proportion becomes the cause of its self: So does every exercise of the life of CHRIST, kindle its own fires, inspires breath into it self, and makes an univocal production of its self in a differing subject; and JESUS becomes the fountain of spiritual Life to us, as the Prophet *Elijah* to the dead childe: when he stretched his hands upon the childe's hands, laid his mouth to his mouth, and formed his posture to the boy, and breathed into him; the spirit returned again into the childe at the prayer of *Elijah*: so when our lives are formed into the imitation of the life of the holiest JESUS, the spirit of God returns into us not only by the efficacy of the imitation, but by the merit and impetration of the actions of JESUS. It is reported in the Bohemian story, that *S. Winceslaus* their King one winter night going to his devotions in a remote Church, barefooted in the snow, and sharpness of unequal and pointed ice, his servant *Podavivus* who waited upon his Masters piety, and endeavoured to imitate his affections began to faint through the violence of the snow and cold, till the King commanded him to follow him, and set his feet in the same footsteps which his feet should mark for him; the servant did so, and either fancied a cure or found one: for he followed his Prince helped forward with shame and zeal to his imitation, and by the following footsteps for him in the snow: In the same manner does the blessed JESUS; for since our way is troublesome, obscure, full of objection and danger, apt to be mistaken and affright our industry; he commands us to mark his footsteps, to tread where his feet have stood, and not only invites us forward by the argument of his example, but he hath troden down much of the difficulty and made the way easier and fit for our feet. For he knows our infirmities and himself hath felt their experience in all things but in the neighbourhoods of sin; and therefore he hath proportioned a

10.

Hilber. Boh. m. l. 4.

way and a path to our strengths and capacities, and like *Jacob* hath marched softly and in evenesse with the children and the cattel, to entertain us by the comforts of his company, and the influences of a perpetuall guide.

11.

4 But we must know that not every thing which CHRIST did, is imitable by us, neither did he in the work of our redemption in all things imitate his heavenly Father. For there are some things which are issues of an absolute power, some are expresses of supreme dominion, some are actions of a Judge, and therefore JESUS prayed for his enemies, and wept over Hierusalem; when at the same instant his Eternall Father laughd them to scorn, for he knew that *their day was coming*, and himself had decreed their ruine. But it became the holy JESUS to imitate his Fathers mercies; for himself was the great instrument of the eternall Compassion; and was the instance of mercy; and therefore in the operation of his Fathers designe, every action of his was univocall and he shewed the power of his Divinity in nothing but in miracles of mercy and illustrations of faith by creating arguments of credibility: In the same proportion we follow JESUS as himself followed his Father; For what he abated by the order to his intendment and designe, we abate by the proportions of our nature; for some excellent acts of his were demonstrations of Divinity, and an excellent grace poured forth upon him *without measure* was their instrument; to which proportions if we should extend our infirmities, we should crack our sinews and dissolve the silver cords before we could entertain the instances and support the burthen. JESUS fasted forty dayes and forty nights; but the manner of our fastings have been in all ages limited to the term of an artificiall day; and in the primitive observations, and the Jewesh rites, men did eat their meal as soon as the stars shone in the firmament. We never read that JESUS laughed, and but once that he rejoiced in spirit; but the Declensions of our Natures cannot bear the weight of a perpetuall grave deportment without the intervals of refreshment and free alacrity. Our ever blessed Saviour suffered the Devotion of *Mary Magdalene* to transport her to an expensive expression of her Religion, and twice to anoint his feet with costly Nard; and yet if persons whose conditions were of no greater lustre or resplendency of Fortune, then was conspicuous in his family and retinue, should suffer the same profusion upon the dressing and perfuming their bodies, possibly it might be truly said, *It might better be sold and distributed to the poor*. This JESUS received as he was the CHRIST and anointed of the Lord, and by this, he suffered himself to be designed to burial, and he received the oblation as Eucharisticall for the ejection of seven Devils, *for therefore she loved much*.

12.

The instances are not many, for however JESUS had some extraordinary transvolations and acts of enigration beyond the lines of his even and ordinary conversation, yet it was but seldom, for his being exemplary was of so great consideration that he chose to have fewer instances of wonder, that he might transmit the more of an imitable vertue. And therefore we may establish this for a rule, and limit of our imitations. Because CHRIST our Law-giver hath describ'd all his Fathers will in fictions and signature of Laws; whatsoever he commanded, and whatsoever he did of precise morality or in pursuance of the laws of Nature, in that we are to trace his footsteps; and in these his laws and his practise differ but as a map and a guide

guide, a law and a Judge, a rule and a president. But in the special instances of action we are to abate the circumstances, and to separate the obedience from the effect, and whatsoever was morall in a ceremoniall performance that is highly imitable, and the obedience of sacrificing and the subordination to laws actually in being, even now they are abrogated, teach us our duty, in a differing subject upon the like reason. JESUS going up to Hierusalem to the feasts, and his observation of the Sabbath teach us our duty in celebration of Festivals constitute by a competent and just authority. For that which gave excellency to the observation of Mosaicall rites, was an Evangelicall duty, and the piety of obedience did not onely consecrate the observations of *Levi*, but taught us our duty in the constitutions of Christianity.

5. As the holy JESUS did some things which we are not to imitate, so we also are to do some things which we cannot learn from his example. For there are some of our duties which presuppose a state of sin; and some suppose a violent temptation and promptnesse to it, and the duties of prevention and the instruments of restitution are proper to us, but conveyed onely by precept and not by president; Such are all the parts and actions of repentance, the duties of mortification and self deniall for whatsoever the H. JESUS did in the matter of austerity, looked directly upon the work of our Redemption, and looked back onely on us by a reflex act as CHRIST did on *Peter* when he lookd him into repentance. Some states of life also there are which JESUS never lead, such are those of temporall Governours Kings and Judges, Merchants, Lawyers, and the state of marriage, in the course of which lives many cases do occurre, which need a president, and the vivacity of an excellent example, especially since all the rules which they have, have not prevented the subtilty of the many inventions which men have found out, nor made provision for all contingencies. Such persons in all their speciall needs are to govern their actions by the rules of proportion, by analogy to the holinesse of the person of JESUS, and the sanctity of his institution: considering what might become a person professing the Discipline of so holy a Master, and what he would have done in the like case, taking our heights by the excellency of his innocency and charity. Onely remember this, that in such cases we must alwayes judge on the strictest side of piety and charity, if it be a matter concerning the interest of a second person, and that in all things we do those actions which are furthest removed from scandall, and such as towards our selves are severe, towards others, full of gentlenesse and sweetnesse. For so would the righteous and mercifull JESUS have done; these are the best analogies and proportions. And in such cases when the wells are dry, let us take water from a cistern, and propound to our selves some exemplar Saint, the necessities of whose life, hath determind his piety to the like occurrences.

But now from these particulars we shall best account, to what the duty of the imitation of JESUS does amount: for it signifies, that we should *walk as he walked*, tread in his steps, with our hand upon the guide, and our eye upon his rule, that we should do glory to him as he did to his Father, and that whatsoever we do, we should be careful that it do him honour, and no reproach to his institution; and then account these to be the integrall parts of our duty, which are imitation of his actions or his spirit,

13.

14.

rit, of his rule or of his life, there being no better imitation of him then in such actions as do him pleasure, however he hath expressed or intimated the precedent.

15.

He that gives almes to the poor, takes JESUS by the hand; he that patiently endures injuries and affronts, helps him to bear his Crosse: He that comforts his brother in affliction, gives an amiable kisse of peace to JESUS: He that bathes his own and his Neighbours sins in tears of penance and compassion, washes his Masters feet: we lead JESUS into the recesses of our heart by holy meditations: And we enter into his heart, when we expresse him in our actions, for so the Apostle sayes, *He that is in Christ, walks as he also walked.* But thus the actions of our life relate to him by way of worship and religion, but the use is admirable and effectual when our actions refer to him as to our copy, and we transcribe the Original to the Life. He that considers with what affections and laniations of spirit, with what effusions of love JESUS prayed, what fervours and assiduity, what innocency of wish, what modesty of posture, what subordination to his Father, and conformity to the Divine Pleasure were in all his Devotions, is taught and excited to holy and religious prayers: The rare sweetnesse of his deportment in all temptations and violencees of his Passion, his charity to his enemies, his sharp reprehensions to the Scribes and Pharisees, his ingenuity toward all men, are living and effectual Sermons to teach us patience and humility, and zeal and candid simplicity, and justice, in all our actions. I adde no more instances, because all the following Discourses will be prosecutions of this intendment. And the life of JESUS is not described to be like a picture in a Chamber of Pleasure, onely for beauty and entertainment of the eye, but like the Egyptian Hyeroglyphicks, whose every feature is a precept, and the the Images converse with men by sense, and signification of excellent discourses.

16.

Socrus. Ep. 11.

It was not without great reason advised, that every man should propound the example of a wise and vertuous personage, as *Cato*, or *Socrates*, or *Brutus*, and by a fiction of imagination to suppose him present as a witnesse, and really to take his life as the direction of all our actions. The best and most excellent of the old Law-givers and Philosophers among the Greeks, had an allay of viciousnesse, and could not be exemplary all over: Some were noted for flatterers, as *Plato* and *Aristippus*; some for incontinency, as *Aristotle*, *Epicurus*, *Zeno*, *Theognis*, *Plato*, and *Aristippus* again; and *Socrates*, whom their Oracle affirmed to be the wisest and most perfect man, yet was by *Porphyry* noted for extreme intemperance of anger both in words and actions: And those Romans who were offered to them for examples, although they were great in reputation, yet they had also great vices; *Brutus* dipt his hand in the blood of *Cesar* his Prince, and his Father by love, endearments and adoption. And *Cato* was but a wife man all day, at night he was used to drink too liberally; and these were the best among the Gentiles. But how happy and richly furnished are Christians with presidents of Saints, whose faith and revelations have been productive of more spiritual graces, and greater degrees of moral perfections? And this I call the privilege of a very great assistance, that I might advance the reputation and account of the life of the glorious JESU, which is not abated by

Athenagoras lib. 3.
§ 12. h. Theognis de
S. Joem. 18. Socrus La-
ertius & Laertius.
Hoc notat S. Crisostomus
L. 5. contra Julian.

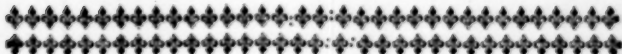
Narrator & presb.
Catonis sapie. mero
sapiens virtus.
Moral.

by the imperfections of humane nature as they were, but receives great heightnings and perfection from the Divinity of his Person, of which they were never capable.

Let us therefore presse after JESUS as *Eliza* did after his Master, with an inseparable prosecution even whither soever he goes; that according to the reasonableness and proportion expressed in *S. Paul's* advice, *As we have born the image of the earthly, we may also bear the image of the heavenly.* For in vain are we called Christians, if we live not according to the example and discipline of Christ the Father of the institution. When *S. Laurence* was in the midst of the torments of the Gridiron, he made this to be the matter of his joy and Eucharist, that he was admitted to the gates through which JESUS had entered: and therefore thrice happy are they who walk in his courts all their dayes. And it is yet a neerer union and vicinity to imprint his life in our souls, and expresse it in our exterior converse; and this is done by him onely who (as *S. Prosper* describes the duty) despises all those guiled vanities which he despised, that fears none of those sadnesses which he suffered, that practises or also teaches those doctrines which he taught, and hopes for the accomplishment of all his promises. * And this is truest Religion, and the most solemn Adoration.

17.

1 Cor. 15. 49.

Diction Malachie
Abbat. apud S. Bern-
ardum in vita S.
Mal.Lib. 2. de vita con-
templat. cap. 21.* Religiosissimus col-
tus imitatio. Lactant.

The PRAYER.

O Eternal, Holy, and most glorious JESU, who hast united two natures of distance infinite, descending to the lowliness of humane nature, that thou mightest exalt humane nature to a participation of the Divinity, we thy people that sate in darkness, and in the shadows of death, have seen great light, to entertain our understandings and enlighten our souls, with its excellent influences, but not to amuse the faculty, or confound the Organ. For the excellency of thy sanctity shining gloriously in every part of thy life, is like thy Angel, the pillar of fire which called thy children from the darknesses of Egypt. Lord open my eyes, and give me power to behold thy righteous glories, and let my soul be so entertained with affections and holy ardors, that I may never look back upon the flames of Sodome, but may follow thy light, which recreates and enlightens and guides us to the mountains of safety, and sanctuaries of Holiness. Holy JESU, since thy image is imprinted on our nature by creation, let me also expresse thy image by all the parts of a holy life, conforming my will and affections to thy holy precepts, submitting my understanding to thy dictates and lessons of perfection; imitating thy sweetnesses and excellencies of society, thy devotion in prayer, thy conformity to GOD, thy zeal tempered with meekness, thy patience brightned

THE PRAYER.

heightned with charity, that heart, and hands, and eyes, and all my faculties, may grow up with the increase of God, till I come to the full measure of the stature of CHRIST; even to be a perfect man in CHRIST JESUS, that at last in thy light I may see light, and reap the fruits of glory from the seeds of sanctity in the imitation of thy holy life, O blessed and holy Saviour JESUS. Amen.



The

THE LIFE OF OVR Blessed LORD and SAVIOUR JESVS CHRIST.

Sect. 1.

The History of the Conception of JESVS.

When the fulnesse of time was come, after the frequent repetition of promises, the expectation of the Jewish Nation, the longings and tedious waitings of all holy persons; the departure of the Scepter from Judah and the Lawgiver from between his feet, God having great compassion toward mankind, remembering his promises and our great necessities sent his Son into the world to take upon him our nature, and all that guilt of sin which stuck close to our nature, and all that punishment which was consequent to our sin; which came to passe after this manner.

In the dayes of Herod the king, the Angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a holy Maid called Mary, espoused to Joseph, and found her in a capacity and excellent disposition to receive the greatest honour that ever was done to the daughters of men. Her imployment was holy and pious, her person young, her yeers florid and springing, her body chaste, her minde humble, and a rare repository of divine graces. She was full of grace and excellencies. And God poured upon her a full measure of honour in making her the mother of the Messias. For the Angel came to her and said, Hail thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee, Blessed art thou among women.

We cannot but imagine the great mixture of innocent disturbances and holy passions that in the first addresse of the Angel did rather discompose her settlednesse, and interrupt the silence of her spirits, then dispossesse her dominion which she ever kept over those subjects, which never had been taught to rebel beyond the meer possibilities of natural imperfection. But if the Angel appeared in the shape of a man, it was an unusual arrest to the blessed Virgin, who was accustomed to retirements, and solitarinesse, and had not known an experience of admitting a comely person, but a stranger to her closet and privacies. But if the Heavenly Messenger did retain a diviner form, more symbolical to Angelical nature, and more proportionable to his glorious Messias, although her daily imployment was a conversation

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sation with Angels, who in their daily ministring to the Saints did behold her chaste conversation coupled with fear, yet they used not any affrighting glories in the offices of their daily attendances, but were seen only by spiritual discernings. However, so it hapned, that when she saw him she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her minde what manner of salutation this should be.

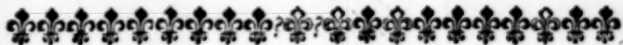
4. But the Angel who came with designs of honour and comfort to her, was not willing that the inequality and glory of the Messenger should, like too glorious a light to a weaker eye, rather confound the faculty, then enlighten the Organ, did, before her thoughts could finde a tongue, invite her to a more familiar confidence then possibly a tender Virgin (though of the greatest serenity and composure) could have put on in the presence of such a beauty and such a holiness. And the Angel said unto her, *Fear not Mary, for thou hast found favour with G O D. And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a Son, and shalt call his name J E S U S.*

5. The Holy Virgin knew her self a person very unlikely to be a mother, for although the desires of becoming a Mother to the MESSIAS were great in every of the daughters of Jacob, and about that time the expectation of his revelation was high and pregnant, and therefore she was espoused to an honest and a just person of her kinred and family, and so might not despair to become a Mother, yet she was a person of a rare sanctity, and so mortified a spirit, that for all this desponation of her according to the desires of her parents, and the custom of the nation, she had not set one step toward the consummation of her marriage, so much as in thought; and possibly had set her self back from it by a vow of chastity and holy celibare. For Mary said unto the Angel, *How shall this be, seeing I know not a man.*

6. But the Angel, who was a person of that nature, which knows no conjunctions but those of love and duty; knew that the piety of her soul, and the religion of her chaste purposes was a great imitator of Angelical purity, and therefore perceived where the Philosophy of her question did consist; and being taught of God, declared, that the manner should be as miraculous, as the message it self was glorious. For the Angel told her that this should not be done by any way which our sin and the shame of Adam had unhallowed, by turning Nature into a blush, and forcing her to a retirement from a publick attesting the means of her own preservation; but the whole matter was from God, and so should the manner be; For the Angel said unto her, *The holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the highest shall overshadow thee, therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God.*

7. When the Blessed Virgin was so ascertained, that she should be a Mother and a Maid; and that two glories, like the two luminaries of Heaven should meet in her, that she might in such a way become the Mother of her Lord, that she might with better advantages be his servant; then all her hopes and all her desires received such satisfaction, as filled all the corners of her heart so much, as indeed was fain to make room for its reception. But she to whom the greatest things of Religion, and the transporations of Devotion were made familiar by the assiduity and piety of her daily practises, however she was full of joy, yet she was carried like a full vessel without the violent tossings of a tempestuous passion, or the wracks of a stormy imagination;

nation; and as the power of the holy Ghost did descend upon her like rain into a fleece of wooll, without any obstreperous noises or violences to nature, but onely the extraordinariness of an exaltation: so her spirit received it with the gentleness and tranquillity fittest for the entertainment of the spirit of love, and a quietness symbolically to the holy guest of her spotlesse womb, the Lamb of God; for she meekly replied, *Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me according unto thy word.* And the angel departed from her, Having done his message. And at the same time the holy Spirit of God did make her to conceive in her womb the immaculate Son of God, the Saviour of the World.



Ad. SECT. I.

Considerations upon the Annunciation
of the Blessed Virgin MARY, and
the Conception of the Holy JESUS.



That which shines brightest presents it self first to the eye, and the devout soul in the chain of excellent and precious things, which are represented in the Counsel, designe, and first beginnings of the work of our redemption, hath not leisure to attend the twinkling of the lesser stars, till it hath flood and admired the glory and eminencies of the Divine love, manifested in the incarnation of the Word eternall. God had no necessity in order to the conservation of his heightning his own felicity, but out of meer and perfect charity and the bowels of compassion, sent into the world his onely Son for remedy to humane miseries, to innoble our nature by an union with Divinity, to sanctifie it with his justice, to enrich it with his grace, to instruct it with his doctrine, to fortifie it with his example, to rescue it from servitude, to assert it into the liberty of the sons of God, and at last to make it partaker of a beatificall Resurrection.

God, who in the infinite treasures of his wisdom and providence, could have found out many other ways for our redemption then the incarnation of his eternall son, was pleased to choose this, not onely that the remedy by man might have proportion to the causes of our ruine, whose introduction and intromission was by the prevarication of man; but also that we might with freer dispensation receive the influences of a Saviour with whom we communicate in nature; although *Abana* and *Pharpar*, rivers of *Damascus*, were of greater Name and current; yet they were not so salutary as the waters of *Jordan* to cure *Naamans* leprosie; and if God had made the remedy of humane nature to have come all the way clothed in prodigy, and every instant

1.
Cum inter nos, Deum, discordiam peccando serimus, tamen ad eos Deus legem suam prius misit, ut nos isti qui peccavimus ad pacem Dei. rogati veniamus.
S. Gregorius.

2.

and seem inglorious by a positive rejection from any participation of the honour.

The Angel in his addresse needed not to go in inquisition after a wandering fire, but knew she was a star fixt in her own Orb: he found her at home, and least that also might be too large a Circuit, she was yet confined to a more intimate retirement; she was in her Oratory private and devout; there are some * curiosities so bold and determinate as to tell the very matter of her prayer, and that she was praying for the salvation of all their world, and the revelation of the *Messias*, desiring she might be so happy, as to kisse the feet of her who should have the glory to be his Mother. We have no security of the particular; but there is no piety so diffident as to require a signe to create a belief that her employment at the instant was holy and religious; but in that disposition she received a grace, which the greatest Queens would have purchased with the quitting of their Diadems; and hath consigned an excellent Document to all women, that they accustom themselves often to those retirements, where none but God and his Angels can have admittance. For the holy JESUS can come to them too, and dwell with them, hallowing their souls, and consigning their bodies to a participation of all his glories. But recollecting of all our scattered thoughts and exteriour extravagancies, and a receding from the inconveniences of a too free Conversation is the best Circumstance to dispose us to a heavenly visitation.

The holy Virgin when she saw an Angel, and heard a testimony from heaven of her grace and piety, was troubled within herself at the salutation, and the manner of it. For she had learned, that the affluence of divine comforts and prosperous successes should not exempt us from fear, but make it the more prudent and wary, lest it intangle us in a vanity of Spirit: God having ordered that our Spirits should be affected with dispositions in some degrees contrariant to exteriour events, that we be fearfull in the affluence of prosperous things, and joyfull in adversity, as knowing that this may produce benefit and advantage; and the changes that are consequent to the other are sometimes full of mischiefs, but alwayes of danger. But her silence and fear were her guardians; that, to prevent excrefcencies of joy, *this*, of vainer complacency.

And it is not altogether inconsiderable to observe that the holy Virgin came to this great perfection and state of piety by a few, and those, modest and even exercises, and externall actions. *S. Paul* travelled over the world, preached to the Gentiles, disputed against the Jews, confounded Hereticks, writ excellently learned letters, suffered dangers, injuries, affronts and persecutions to the height of wonder, and by these violences of life, action and patience obtained the crown of an excellent religion and devotion: But the holy Virgin, although she was engaged sometimes in an active life, and in the exercise of an ordinary and small œconomy and government of a family yet she arrived to her perfections by the means of a quiet and silent piety; the internall actions of love, devotion and contemplation: and instructs us, that not onely those who have opportunity and powers of a magnificent religion or a pompous charity, or miraculous conversion of souls, or assiduous and effectually preachings, or exteriour demonstrations of corporall mercy, shall have the greatest crowns and the addition of degrees and accidental rewards: but the silent affections, the splendours of an internall

devotion, the unions of love, humility and obedience, the daily offices of prayer and praises sung to God, the acts of faith and fear, of patience and meeknesse, of hope and reverence, repentance and charity, and those graces which walk in a vail and silence make great ascents to God, and as sure progresse to favour and a crown, as the more ostentous and laborious exercises of a more solemn religion. No man needs to complain of want of power, or opportunities for religious perfections; a devout woman in her closet, praying with much zeal and affections for the conversion of souls, is in the same order to a *shining, like the stars in glory*, as he, who by excellent discourses puts it into a more forward disposition to be actually performed. And possibly her prayers obtained energy and force to my Sermon, and made the ground fruitfull, and the seed spring up to life eternall. Many times God is present in the still voice, and private retirements of a quiet religion, and the constant spiritualities of an ordinary life; when the loud and impetuous windes, and the flaming fires of more laborious, and expensive actions are profitable to others onely, like a tree of Balsome distilling precious liquour for others, not for its own use.



The PRAYER.

O Eternall and Almighty God, who didst send thy holy Angel in embassy to the blessed Virgin-Mother of our Lord, to manifest the actuating thine eternall purpose of the redemption of mankind by the incarnation of thine eternall son; put me by the assistances of thy Divine grace into such holy dispositions, that I may never impede the event and effect of those mercies, which in the Councells of thy predestination thou didst designe for me. Give me a promptnesse to obey thee to the degree and semblance of Angelicall alacrity; give me holy purity and piety, prudence and modesty, like those excellencies which thou didst create in the ever blessed Virgin the Mother of God; grant that my employment be alwayes holy, unmixt with worldly affections, and as much as my condition of life will bear, retired from secular interests and disturbances, that I may converse with Angels, entertain the holy JESUS, conceive him in my Soul, nourish him with the expresses of most innocent and holy affections, and bring him forth and publish him in a life of piety and obedience, that he may dwell in me for ever, and I may for ever dwell with him in the house of eternall pleasures and glories world without end. Amen.

The



SECT. 2.

The bearing of JESUS in the womb of the blessed Virgin.



1. Although the blessed Virgin had a faith as prompt and ready as her body was chaste, and her soul pure, yet God, who uses to give full measure, shaken together, and running over, did by way of confirmation and fixing the confidence of her assent give an instance of his omnipotency in the very particular of an extraordinary conception: For the Angel said, *Behold thy cousin Elizabeth hath also conceived a son in her old age. and this is the first moneth with her that was called barren: for with God nothing shall be impossible.* A lesse argument would have satisfied the necessity of a faith, which had no scruple; and a greater would not have done it in the incredulity of an ungente and pertinacious spirit. But the holy Maid had complacency enough in the message, and holy desires about her to carry her understanding as far as her affections, even to the fruition of the Angels message, which is such a sublimity of faith, that it is its utmost consummation, and shall be its crown when our faith is turned into vision, our hopes into actual possessions, and our grace into glory.

2. And she, who was now full of God, bearing God in her virgin womb, and the holy Spirit in her heart, who had also overshadowed her, enabling her to a supernaturall and miraculous conception, *arose with haste and gladnesse to communicate that joy which was desired for all the world; and she found no breast to pour forth the first emanations of her overjoyed heart, so fit as her cousin Elizabeths, who had received testimony from God to have been righteous, walking in all the commandments of the Lord blamelesse, who also had a speciall portion in this great honour; for she was desired to be the mother of the Baptist who was sent as a forerunner to prepare the wayes of the Lord, and to make his paths straight, and Mary arose in those dayes and went into the hill country with hast into a city of Judab.*

3. Her hast was in proportion to her joy and desires, but yet went no greater pace then her religion; for as in her journey she came neer to Jerusalem, she turned in that she might visit his temple, Whose Temple she her self was now; and there, not onely to remember the pleasures of religion, which she had felt in continuall descents and showres falling on her pious heart for the space of eleven yeers attendance there in her childhood, but

HISTORY OF JESUS BEING IN THE WOMB

also to pay the first fruits of her thanks, and joy, and to lay all her glory at his feet, whose humble handmaid she was in the greatest honour of being his blessed mother. Having worshipped, she went on her journey, and entered into the house of Zacharias and saluted Elizabeth.

4.

It is not easy to imagin what a collision of joyes was at this blessed meeting; two mothers of two great Princes, the one *the greatest that was born of woman*, and the other was his Lord, and these made mothers by two miracles, met together with joy and mysteriounesse, where the Mother of our Lord, went to visit the mother of his servant, and the holy Ghost made the meeting festivall, and descended upon Elizabeth and she prophesied. Never but in heaven was there more joy and extasie. The persons were women whose fancies and affections were not onely hallowed, but made pregnant and big with religion, meeting together to compare and unite their joyes, and their Eucharist, and then made propheticall and inspired, must needs have discoursed like Seraphims and the most extasied order of intelligencies; for all the faculties of nature were turned into grace, and expressed in their way, the excellent solemnitie. *For it came to passe when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the Babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the holy Ghost.*

5.

After they had both prophesied and sang their hymns, and resaluted each other with the religion of saints, and the joyes of Angels, *Mary abode with her cousin Elizabeth, about three moneths, and then returned to her own house.* Where when she appeared with her holy burden to her husband Joseph, and that he perceived her to be with childe, and knew that he had never unsealed that holy fountain of virginall purity, he was troubled; for although her deportment had been pious and chaste to a miracle, her carriage reserved, and so grave that she drave away temptations and impure visits, and all unclean purposes from the neighbourhood of her holy person; yet when he saw she was with childe, and had not yet been taught a lesson higher then the principles of nature, he was minded to put her away, for he knew she was with childe; but yet privily, because he was a good man, and knew her piety to have been such, that it had almost done violence to his sence, and made him disbelieve what was visible and notorious, and therefore he would do it privately. *But while he thought on these things, the Angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her, is of the holy Ghost. Then Joseph being raised from sleep, did as the Angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife.*

Con-

Ad. Sect. 2.

Considerations concerning the circumstances
of the Interwall between the conception
and Nativity.



1. When the blessed Virgin was ascertained of the manner of her becoming a Mother, and that her tremblings were over upon the security she should preserve her virgin purity as a clean oblation to the honour of God, then she expressed her consent to the Angelicall message, and instantly she conceived the holy JESUS in her womb by the supernaturall and divine influence of the holy Ghost. For she was highly zealous to reconcile her being Mother to the *Messias*, with those purities and holy coelibate, which she had designed to keep as advantages to the interests of religion, and his honour who chose her from all the daughters of Adam to be instrumentall of the restitution of grace and innocence to all her Fathers family. And we shall receive benefit from so excellent example, if we be not so desirous of a privilege, as of a vertue; of honour as of piety; and as we submit to the weight and pressure of sadnesses, and infelicities that Gods will may be accomplished, so we must be also ready to renounce an exteriour grace or favour, rather then it should not be consistent with exemplar and rare piety.

2. When the Son of God was incarnate in the womb of his Virgin-Mother, the holy Maid *arose*; and though she was superexalted by an honour greater then the world yet ever saw, she still dwelt upon the foundation of humility, and to make that vertue more signall and eminent, *she arose* and went hastily to visit her Cousin *Elizabeth*, who also had conceived a son in her old age; for so we all should be curious and watchfull against vanities and transpositions, when we are advanced to the gayeties of prosperous accidents, and in the greatest privileges descend to the lowest, to exercise a greater measure of vertue against the danger of those tentations which are planted against our heart to ruine our hopes and glories.

3. But the joyes that the Virgin Mother had, were such as concerned all the world, and that part of them, which was her peculiar, she would not con-ceale from persons apt to their entertainiment, but go to publish Gods mercy toward her to another holy person, that they might joyn in the praises of God; as knowing, that though it may be convenient to represent our personall necessities in private, yet Gods gracious returns, and the blessings he makes to descend on us are more fit, when there is no personall danger collaterally appendant, to be published in the Communion of Saints; that the hopes of others may receive increase, that their faith may have confirmation, that their charity and Eucharist may grow up to become excellent and great, and the praises of God may be sung aloud, till the sound strikes at heaven, and joyn with the Hallelujahs which the *morning stars* in their Orbs pay to their great Creatour.

Ad. Sect. 2. CONSIDERATIONS UPON THE INTERVALL

When the holy virgin had begun her journey, she made haft over the mountains, that she might not onely satisfie the desires of her joy by a speedy gratulation, but least she should be too long abroad, under the dispersion and difcomposing of her retirements: And therefore she hastens to an inclosure, to her Cousins house, as knowing that all vertuous women, like *Tortoises*, carry their house on their heads, and their chappel in their heart, and their danger in their eye, and their souls in their hands, and God in all their actions. And indeed, her burden, which she bare, hindred her not, but she might make haft enough; for as her spirit was full of cheerfulness and alacrity, so even her body was made aëry and vegete. For there was no sin in her burden to fill it with naturall inconveniences; and there is this excellency in all spirituall things, that they do no disadvantage to our persons, nor retard our just temporall interests. And the religion by which we carry CHRIST within us, is neither so peevish as to disturb our health; nor so sad as to discompose our just and modest cheerfulness; nor so prodigall as to force us to needs, and ignoble trades; but recreates our body by the medicine of holy fastings and temperance; fills us full of serenities and complacencies by the sweetnesses of a holy conscience, and joyes spirituall; promotes our temporall interests by the gains and increases of the rewards of charity, and by securing Gods providence over us, while we are in the pursuit of the heavenly kingdom. And as in these dispositions she climb the mountains with much facility: so there is nothing in our whole life of difficulty greater then those assistances we receive from the holiest JESUS, when we carry him about us; as the valleys are exalted, so the mountains are made plain before us.

5.

When her Cousin *Elizabeth* saw the Mother of her Lord come to visit her, as the Lord himself descended to visit all the world in great humility, she was blest and transported to the height of wonder, and prophecy, and the babe sprang in her womb and was sanctified, first doing his homage and adoration to his Lord, that was in presence. And we also, although we can do nothing, unlesse the Lord first prevent us with his gracious visitation; yet if he first come unto us, and we accept and entertain him with the expresses and correspondencies of our duty, we shall receive the grace and honour of sanctification. But if *S. Elizabeth*, who received testimony from God that she walked in all the Commandments of the Lord blamelesse, was carried into extasie wondring at the dignation and favour done to her, by the Mother of her Lord; with what preparations and holy solemnities ought we to entertain his addresses to us by his holy Sacrament, by the immissions of his Spirit, by the assistances of his graces, and all other his vouchsafings and descents into our hearts?

6.

The blessed Virgin hearing her Cousin full of spirit and prophecy, calling her *blest*, and praying her faith and confirming her joy, instantly sang her hymn to God, returning those praises which she received to him to whom they did appertain. For so we should worship God with all our prayes, being willing upon no other condition to extend one hand to receive our own honour, but that with the other we might transmit it to God. That as God is honoured in all his Creatures, so he may be honoured in us too: looking upon the graces which God hath given us, but as greater instruments and abilities to serve him, being none of ours, but talents which are entrusted into our banks to be improved. But as a precious pearl is

orient and medicinall, because God hath placed those excellencies in it for ends of his own, but it self is dead to all apprehensions of it, and knows no reflexions of it upon its own value, onely God is magnified in his work: so is every pious person, precious, and holy, but mortified to all vainer complacencies in those singularities and eminencies which God plac'd there, because he was so pleased; saying, there he would have a Temple built; because from thence he would take delight to receive glory and adoration.

After all these holy and festivall joyes, which the two glad Mothers feast-ed themselves withall, a sad cloud did intervene and pass'd before the face of the blessed Virgin. The just and righteous *Joseph* her espoused Husband, perceiving her to be with childe, was minded to put her away, as not knowing the divinity of the fountain which watered the Virgins sealed and hallowed womb, and made it fruitfull. But he purposed to do it privily, that he might preserve the reputation of his spouse, whose piety he knew was great, and was sorrowfull it should now set in a sad night, and be extinct. But it was an exemplar charity, and reads to us a rule for our deportment towards erring and lapsed persons, that we intreat them with meeknesse and pity, and fear: not hastening their shame, nor provoking their spirit, nor making their remedy desperate, by using of them rudely, till there be no worse thing for them to fear if they should be dissolved into all licentiousnesse. For an open shame is commonly protested unto, when it is remediless, and the person either despaire and sinks under the burden, or else grows impudent and tramples upon it. But the gentleness of a modest, and charitable remedy, preserves that which is vertues girdle, fear and blushing; and the beginning of a punishment chides them into the horror of remembrance and guilt, but preserves their meeknesse and modesty, because they not feeling the worst of evils, dare not venture upon the worst of sins.

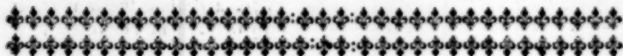
But it seems the blessed Virgin having received this greatest honour had not made it known to her husband *Joseph*, and when she went to her Cousin *Elizabeth*, the Virgin was told of it by her Cousin, before she spake of it her self, for her Cousin had it by revelation and the spirit of prophecy. And it is in some circumstances, and from some persons more secure to conceal visions, and those heavenly gifts which create affirmations among men, then to publish them, which may possibly minister to vanity; And those exterior graces may do Gods work, though no observer note them, but the person for whose sake they are sent. Like rain falling in uninhabited valleys, where no eye observes the shower; yet the valleys laugh and sing to God in their refreshment without a wimle. However, it is better to hear the report our good things from the mouths of others, then from our selves: and better yet if the beauty of the tabernacle be covered with skins, that none of our beauties be seen but by worshippers, that is, when the glory of God and the interests of religion or charity are concerned in their publication. For so it happened to be in the case of the blessed Virgin, as she related to her Cousin *Elizabeth*, and so it happened not to be, as she related to her husband *Joseph*.

The holy Virgin could not but know, that *Joseph* would be troubled with sorrow, and insecure apprehensions concerning her being with childe, but such was her innocence and her confidence in God, that she held her peace,

expecting which way God would provide a remedy to the inconvenience; for if we *commit ourselves to God in well doing as unto a faithful Creator* preserving the tranquillity of our spirits, and the evenness of our temper in the assault of infamy and dis-reputation, GOD, who loves our innocence, will be its patron, and will assert it from the scandal, if it be expedient for us; if it be not, it is not fit we should desire it. But if the Holy JESUS did suffer his Mother to fall into mis-interpretation and suspect, which could not but be a great affliction to her excellent spirit, rarely temperd, as an eye, highly sensible of every ruder touch; we must not think it strange, if we be tryed and pressed with a calamity and unhandsome accidents; only remember, that GOD will finde a remedy to the trouble, and will sanctifie the affliction, and secure the person, if we be innocent as was the holy Virgin.

10.

But Joseph was not hasty in the execution of his purposes, nor of making his thoughts determinate, but stood long in deliberation, and longer before he acted it, because it was an invidious matter, and a rigour: and before the thing was irremediable, GOD ended his Question by a heavenly demonstration, and sent an Angel to reveal to him the innocence of his Spouse, and the Divinity of her Son; and that he was an immediate derivative from Heaven, and the Heir of all the World. And in all our doubts we shall have a resolution from Heaven or some of its Ministers, if we have recourse thither for a guide, and be not hasty in our discourses, or inconsiderate in our purposes, or rash in judgement. For GOD loves to give assistances to us, when we most fairly and prudently endeavour, that Grace be not put to do all our work, but to facilitate our labour: not creating new faculties, but improving those of Nature. If we consider warily, GOD will guide us in the determination: But a hasty person out-runs his guide, prevaricates his rule, and very often engages upon error.



THE PRAYER.

O Holy JESU, Son of the Eternal God, thy glory is far above all Heavens; And yet thou didst descend to Earth, that thy descent might be the more glorious, by how much thy glories were admirable, and natural and inseparable: I adore thy holy humanity with humble veneration, and the thankful addresses of religious joy, because thou hast personally united humane nature to the Eternal Word, carrying it above the seats of the highest Cherubim. This great and glorious Mystery is the honour and glory of man: it was the expectation of our Fathers, who saw the mysteriousness of thy incarnation at great and obscure distances: And blessed be thy Name, that thou hast caused me to be born after the fulfilling of thy prophecies, and the consummation and exhibition of so great a love, so great mysteriousness. Holy JESU, though I admire and adore the immensity of thy love and condescension, who wert pleased to undergo our burdens and infirmities for us, yet

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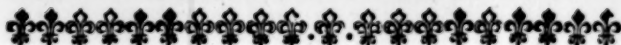
I abhor my self and detest my own impurities, which were so great and contradictory to the excellency of G O D, that to destroy Sin and save us, thou wert sent into the World, to dye our death for us, and to give us of thy life.

2.

DEAREST J E S U, thou didst not breathe one sigh, nor shed one drop of blood, nor weep one tear, nor suffer one stripe, nor preach one Sermon for the salvation of the Devils; and what sadnesse and shame is it then, that I should cause so many insufferable loads of sorrows to fall upon thy sacred head? Thou art wholly given for me, wholly spent upon my uses, and wholly for every one of the Elect. Thou in the beginning of the work of our redemption didst suffer nine months imprisonment in the pure womb of thy Holy Mother, to redeem me from the eternal servitude of Sin and its miserable consequents. Holy J E S U, let me be born anew, receive a new birth and a new life, imitating thy graces and excellencies by which thou art beloved of thy Father, and hast obtained for us a favour and atonement. Let thy holy will be done by me, let all thy will be wrought in me, let thy will be wrought concerning me, that I may do thy pleasure, and submit to the dispensation of thy providence, and conform to thy holy will, and may for ever serve thee in the communion of Saints, in the society of thy redeemed ones, now and in the glories of eternity. Amen.



The



Se^ct. 3.

The Nativity of our blessed Saviour J E S U S.

1.



He holy Maid long'd to be a glad Mother, and she who carried a burden, whose proper commensuration is the dayes of Eternity counted the tedious minutes, expecting when the Sun of Righteousnesse should break forth from his bed where nine moneths he hid himself as behinde a fruitfull cloud. About the same time G O D, who in his infinite wisdom does concentre, and tye together in one end, things of disparate and disproportionate natures, making things improbable to cooperate to what wonder or to what truth he pleases, brought the holy Virgin to Bethlehem the city of David to be taxed with her husband Joseph, according to a Decree upon all the World issuing from Augustus Caesar. But this hapned in this conjunction of time, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Prophet Micah: *And thou Bethlehem in the land of Judah, art not the least among the Princes of Judah, for out of thee shall come a Governour, that shall rule my people Israel.*

Micah 5.

2.

* Juxta prophetiam
Hos. 11. 1. 2.
ut & eiaos is
αβελ οσβαλ
παιδες ιουδαι
αβελ οσβαλ
αβελ. apud I. x.
sed hanc peridum
Judai etate und ex
Hebraeo ex. SIC
2. 2. 2. 2. 2. 2.
αβελ οσβαλ
in fide Bealetem,
Sic domus panis in
signatur.

She that had conceived by the operation of that spirit, who dwels within the element of love, was no wayes impeded in her journey, by the greatness of her burden, but arrived at Bethlehem in the throng of strangers, who had so filled up the places of hospitality and publick entertainment, that there was no room for Joseph and Mary in the Inne. But yet she felt that it was necessary to retire where she might softly lay her burden, who began now to call at the gates of his prison, and Nature was ready to let him forth. But she that was Mother to the King of all the creatures, could finde no other but a stable, * a cave of a rock; whither she retired, where when it began to be with her after the manner of women, she humbly bowed her knees, in the posture and guise of worshippers; and in the midst of glorious thoughts and highest speculation, brought forth her first-born into the world.

3.

As there was no sin in the conception, so neither had she pain in the production. For to her alone did not the punishment of Eve extend, that in sorrow she should bring forth. For where nothing of sin was an ingredient, there misery cannot cohabite. And as to conceive by the holy Ghost was glorious, so to bring forth any of the fruits of the Spirit, is joyful, and full of felicity. And he that came from his grave fast tyed with a stone and signature, and into the Colledge of Apostles, the doors being shut, and into the glories of his Father through the solid orbs of all the Firmament, came also (as the Church piously beleeves) into the World so, without doing violence to the virginal and pure body of his Mother, that he did also leave her virginity entire, to be as a seal, that none might open the gate of that Sanctuary, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the LORD by the Prophet

phet, *This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter in by it, because the Lord God of Israel hath entered by it, therefore it shall be shut.* 27

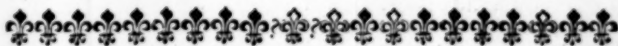
Although all the World were concerned in the birth of this great Prince, yet I finde no story of any one that ministred at it, save onely Angels who knew their duty to their LORD, and the great interests of that person; whom, as soon as he was born they presented to his Mother, who could not but receive him with a joy, next to the rejoycings of glory and beatifick vision, seeing him to be born her son, who was the Son of GOD; of greater beauty then the Sun, purer then Angels, more loving then the Seraphims, as deer as the eye and heart of GOD, where he was from eternity ingraven, his beloved and his onely begotten.

When the Virgin Mother now felt the first tenderesse and yernings of a Mothers bowels; saw the Saviour of the World born, poor as her fortunes could represent him, naked as the innocence of Adam, she took him, and wrapt him in swaddling clothes; and after she had a while cradled him in her arms, she laid him in a manger; for so was the designe of his humility; that as the last Scene of his life was represented amongst Theeves, so the first was amongst beasts, the sheep and the oxen; according to that mysterious hymn of the Prophet *Abakuk, His brightnesse was as the light, he had horns coming out of his hand, and there was the hiding of his power.*

But this place, which was one of the great instances of his humility, grew to be as venerable as became an instrument, and it was consecrated into a Church, the Crib into an Altar, where first lay that Lamb of GOD, which afterwards was sacrificed for the sins of all the World. And when *Adrian* the Emperour, who intended a great despight to it, built a temple to *Venus* and *Adonis*, in that place, where the holy Virgin Mother, and her more holy Son, were humbly laid, even so he could not obtain, but that even amongst the Gentile inhabitants of the neighbouring countries, it was held in an account far above scandal and contempt. For GOD can ennoble even the meanest of creatures, especially if it be but a relative, and instrumental to Religion, higher then the injuries of scoffers and malicious persons. But it was then a Temple full of Religion, full of glory, when Angels were the Ministers, the holy Virgin was the worshipper, and CHRIST the *Numen*.

*Nabuc. 2. 4. In medio
animationis cognosce-
ris. Sic LXX.*

*Ver. Sede de locis
sacris. cap. 3.
Hieron. Epist. 4. 10.*



Ad. Sect. 3.

Considerations upon the birth of our blessed Saviour

J E S U S.



Although the blessed JESUS desired with the ardcency of an inflamed love to be born, and to finish the work of our Redemption, yet he did not prevent the period of Nature, nor break the laws of the womb, and antedate his own functions which he had established for ever. He staid nine moneths, and then brake forth as a Giant joyful

joyfull to run his course. For præmature and hasty actions, and such counsels as know not how to expect the times appointed in Gods decree, are like hasty fruit, or a young person snatcht away in his florid age, sad and untimely. He that hastens to enjoy his wish before the time, raises his own expectation, and yet makes it unpleasant by impatience, and looses the pleasure of the fruition, when it comes, because he hath made his desires bigger then the thing can satisfie. He that must eat an hour before his time, gives probation of his intemperance or his weaknesse; and if we dare not trust God with the Circumstance of the event, and stay his leisure, either we disrepute the infinity of his wisdom, or give clear demonstration of our own vanity.

2. When God descended to earth, he chose to be born in the suburbs and retirement of a small Town, but he was pleas'd to die at *Jerusalem*, the Metropolis of *Judaea*, which chides our shame and pride who are willing to publish our gayeties in Piazza's and the corners of the streets of most populous places, but our defects and the instruments of our humiliation we carry into deserts, and cover with the night, and hide them under ground, thinking no secrecy dark enough to hide our shame, nor any theatre large enough to behold our pompous vanities; for so we make provisions for pride, and take great care to exclude humility.

3. When the holy Virgin now perceived that the expectation of the nations was arriv'd, at the very doors of revelation and entrance into the world, she brought forth the holy JESUS, who like light through transparent glasse, past through, or a ripe pomegranate from a fruitfull tree, fell to the earth without doing violence to its Nurse and Parent: She had no ministers to attend, but angels, and neither her poverty nor her piety would permit her to provide other Nurses; but her self did the offices of a tender and pious parent. She kiss'd him and worshipp'd him, and thank'd him that he would be born of her, and she suckled him, and bound him in her arms and swadling bands, and when he had represented to God her first scene of joy and Eucharist, she softly laid him in the manger, till her desires and his own necessities called her to take him, and to rock him softly in her arms: and from this deportment she read a lecture of piety and maternall care, which mothers should perform toward their children when they are born, not to neglect any of that duty which nature and maternall piety requires.

4. JESUS was pleas'd to be born of a poor mother in a poor place, in a cold winters night, far from home, amongst strangers, with all the circumstances of humility and poverty; and no man will have cause to complain of his course robe, if he remembers the swadling clothes of this holy child: nor to be disquieted at his hard bed when he considers JESUS laid in a manger; nor to be discontented at his thin table, when he calls to minde the King of heaven and earth was fed with a little breast milk. But since the eternal wisdom of the Father, who knew to choose the good and refuse the evil, did choose a life of poverty, it gives us demonstration, that riches and honors, those idols of the worlds esteem, are so far from creating true felicities, that they are not of themselves eligible in the number of good things: however no man is to be ashamed of innocent poverty, of which many wise men make vows, and of which the holy JESUS made election, and his Apostles after him made publicke profession. And if any man will chose and delight in the affluence of temporall good things, suffering himself to be transported with captive affections in the pleasures of every day, he may well make a
question

question whether he shall speed as well hereafter, since GODS usual method is, that they onely who follow CHRIST here, shall be with him for ever.

The condition of the person who was born, is here of greatest consideration. For he that cried in the manger, that sucked the paps of a Woman, that hath exposed himself to poverty, and a world of inconveniencies, is the Son of the living GOD; of the same substance with his Father, begotten before all Ages, before the morning stars; he is GOD eternall. He is also by reason of the personal union of the Divinity with his humane nature, the Son of GOD, not by adoption, as good Men, and beatified Angels are; but by an extraordinary and miraculous generation. He is the Heir of his Fathers glories and possessions, not by succession, (for his Father cannot die,) but by an equality of communication: He is the expresse image of his Fathers person according to both natures; the miracle and excess of his God-head being, as upon wax, imprinted upon all the capacities of his humanity: And after all this he is our *Saviour*; that to our duties of wonder and adoration, we may adde the affections of love and union, as himself, besides his being admirable in himself, is become profitable to us. *Verè verbum hoc est abbreviatum*, saith the Prophet: the eternal Word of the Father is shorned to the dimensions of an infant.

Here then are concentrated the prodigies of Greatnesse and Goodnesse, of Wisdom and Charity, of Meeknesse and Humility; and march all the way in mystery and incomprehensible mixtures, if we consider him in the bosom of his Father, where he is seated by the postures of love and essential felicity, and in the manger where love also placed him, and an infinite desire to communicate his felicities to us. As he is GOD, his throne is in Heaven, and he fills all things by his immensity: as he is *Man* he is circumscribed by an uneasie cradle, and cries in a stable. As he is GOD, he is seated upon a superexalted throne; as *Man*, exposed to the lowest estate of uneasinesse and need. As GOD, clothed in a robe of glory at the same instant when you may behold and wonder at his *humanity*, wrapped in cheap and unworthy cradle-bands. As GOD, he is encircled with millions of Angels; as *Man*, in the company of beasts: As GOD, he is the eternall Word of the Father, Eternal, sustained by himself, all-sufficient and without need; and yet he submitted himself to a condition imperfect, inglorious, indigent, and necessitous: and this consideration is apt and natural to produce great affections of love, duty, and obedience, desires of union and conformity to his sacred Person, life, actions, and laws; that we resolve all our thoughts, and finally determine all our reason, and our passions, and capacities upon that saying of S Paul, *He that loves not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed.*

Upon the consideration of these glories, if a pious soul shall upon the supports of Faith and Love enter into the stable where this great King was born; and with affections behold every member of the Holy Body, and thence passe into the Soul of JESUS, we may see a scheme of holy Meditations, enough to entertain all the degrees of our love, and of our understanding, and make the mystery of the Nativity as fruitful of holy thoughts, as it was of blessings to us. And it may serve instead of a description of the person of JESUS conveyed to us in imperfect and Apocryphal schemes. If we could behold his sacred feet, with those affections
which

which the holy Virgin did, we have transmitted to us those mysteries in story, which she had first in part, by spiritual and divine infused light, and afterwards by observation. Those holy feet tender and unable to support his sacred body, should bear him over all the Province of his cure with great zeal for the gaining of souls, to the belief and obedience of his holy laws; those are the feet that should walk upon seas and hills of water as upon firm pavement; at which the Lepers and diseased persons should stoop and gather health up, which *Mary Magdalen* should wash with tears, and wipe with her hair, and anoint with costly Nard, as expressions of love and adoration, and there finde absolution and remedy for her sins; and which finally should be rent by the nails of the Crosse, and afterwards ascend above the Heavens, making the earth to be his footstool. From hence take patterns of imitation that our piety be symbolical, that our affections be passionate and Eucharistical, full of love, and wonder, and adoration, that our feet tread in the same steps, and that we transfer the symbol into mystery, and the mystery to devotion, praying the holy JESUS to actuate the same mercies in us, which were finished at his holy feet, forgiving our sins, healing our sicknesses; and then place our selves irremovably, becoming his Disciples, and strictly observing the rules of his holy institution, sitting at the feet of this our greatest Master.

8. In the same manner a pious person may with the blessed Virgin passe to the consideration of his holy hands, which were so often lift up to GOD in prayer, whose touch was miraculous and medicinal, cleansing Lepers, restoring perishing limbs, opening blinde eyes, raising dead persons to life; those hands which fed many thousands by two miracles of multiplication, that purged the Temple from prophaneesse, that in a sacramental manner bare his own body, and gave it to be the food and refreshment of elect souls; and after, were cloven and rent upon the Crosse, till the wounds became (after the resurrection) so many transparencies and glorious instruments of solemn, spiritual, and efficacious benediction. Transmīt this meditation into affections and practises, lifting up pure hands in prayer, that our Devotions be united to the merits of his glorious intercession; and putting our selves into his hands and holy providence, let us beg those effects upon our souls and spiritual cures, which his precious hands did operate upon their bodies, transferring those similitudes to our ghostly and personal advantages.

9. We may also behold his holy breast, and consider, that there lay that sacred heart like the Dove within the Ark, speaking peace to us, being the regiment of love and serenity, the fountain of both the Sacraments, running out in the two holy streams of Blood and Water, when the rock was smitten, when his holy side was pierced: and there with S. *John* let us lay our head, and place our heart, and thence draw a treasure of holy revelations and affections, that we may rest in him only, and upon him lay our burdens, filling every corner of our heart with thoughts of the most amiable and beloved JESUS.

10. In like manner we may unite the day of his Nativity with the day of his Passion, and consider all the parts of his body as it was instrumental in all the work of our redemption, and so imitate, and in some proportion partake of that great variety of sweetneses and amorous reflexes, and gracious intercourses which passed between the blessed Virgin and the holy childe, according

according to his present capacities, and the clarity of that light which was communicated to her by Divine Infusion; and all the members of this blessed childe, his *eyes*, his *face*, his *head*, all the *organs* of his senses afford variety of entertainment and motion to our affections, according as they served in their several employments and cooperations in the mysteries of our restitution.

But his *body* was but his *Souls* upper-garment, and the considerations of this are as immaterial and spiritual as the soul it self, and more immediate to the mystery of the Nativity. This soul is of the same nature and substance with ours; in this, inferior to the Angels, that of it self it is incomplete and discurfve in a lower order or ratiocination; but in this, superior. First, that it is *personally united* to the Divinity; full of the holy Ghost, overflowing with grace, which was dispensed to it without measure. (And by the mediation of this union, as it self is exalted far above all orders of intelligences, so we also have contracted alliance with G O D, teaching us not to unravel our excellencies by infamous deportments.) Secondly, Here also we may meditate, that his *memory* is indeterminable and unalterable, ever remembering to do us good, and to present our needs to G O D by the means of his holy intercession. Thirdly, that his *understanding* is without ignorance, knowing the secrets of our hearts, full of mysterious secrets of his Fathers kingdom, in which *all the treasures of the wisdom and knowledge of God are hidden*. Fourthly, that his *will* is impeccable, entertained with an uninterrupted act of love to G O D, greater then all Angels and beatified spirits present to G O D in the midst of the transpositions and ravishments of Paradise: that *this will* is full of love to us, of humility in it self, of conformity to G O D, wholly resign'd by acts of adoration and obedience; it was moved by six wings, zeal of the honour of G O D; and compunction for our sins, pity to our miseries, and hatred of our impieties, desires of satisfying the wrath of G O D, and great joy at the consideration of all the fruits of his Nativity, the appeasing of his Father, the redemption of his brethren. And upon these wings he mounted up into the throne of glory, carrying our nature with him above the seats of Angels. These considerations present themselves to all, that with piety and devotion behold the holy Babe lying in the obscure and humble place of his Nativity.

11.

Cal. 12

The P R A Y E R.

Holy and immortal J E S U S, I adore and worship thee with the lowest prostrations and humility of soul and body, and give thee all thanks for that great love to us, whereof thy nativity hath made demonstration; for that humility of thine expressed in the poor and ignoble circumstances, which thou didst voluntarily chuse in the manner of thy birth; and I present to thy holy Humanity inclosed in the adorable Divinity, my body and soul; humbly desiring, that as thou didst clothe thy self with a humane body, thou mayest invest me with the robes of righteousness, covering my sins, inabling my weaknesses, and sustaining my mortality, till I shall finally in conformity to thy beauties and perfections be clothed with the stole of glory. Amen.

2.

Vouchsafe to come to me by a more intimate and spiritual approximation, that so thou mayest lead me to thy Father; for of my self I cannot move one step towards thee. Take me by the hand, place me in thy heart; that there I may live, and there I may dye: that as thou hast united our nature to thy eternal being, thou mightest also unite my person to thine by the interior adunations of love and obedience, and conformity. Let thy ears be open to my prayers, thy merciful eyes look upon my miseries, thy holy hands be stretcht out to my relief and succour; let some of those precious distilling tears, which nature and thy compassion, and thy sufferings did cause to distill and drop from those sacred fontinels: Water my stony heart, and make it soft, apt for the impressions of a melting, obedient and corresponding love; and moisten mine eyes, that I may upon thy stock of pity and weeping, mourn for my sins, that so my tears and sorrows being drops of water coming from that holy rock, may indeed be united unto thine, and made precious by such holy mixtures. Amen.

3.

Blessed JESU, now that thou hast sanctified and exalted humane nature, and made, even my body precious by a personal uniting it to the Divinity; teach me so reverently to account of it, that I may not dare to profane it with impure lusts or carnive affections, and unballow that ground where thy holy feet have troden. Give me ardent desires, and efficacious prosecutions of these holy effects, which thou didst designe for us in thy Nativity, and other parts of our redemption: give me great confidence in thee, which thou hast encouraged, by the exhibition of so glorious favours; great sorrow and confusion of face at the sight of mine own imperfections, and estrangments and great distances from thee and the perfections of thy soul; and bring me to thee by the strictnesses of a zealous and affectionate imitation of those sanctities, which next to the hypostatical union, added lustre and excellency to thy humanity, that I may live here with thee in the expresse of a holy life, and dye with thee by mortification, and an unwearied patience, and reign with thee in immortal glories, world without end. Amen.

Discourse



Discourse. 1.

Of nursing children in imitation of the Blessed Virgin-Mother.



These latter ages of the world have declined into a softnesse above the effeminacy of Asian Princes, and have contracted customes which those innocent and healthfull dayes of our Ancestors knew not, whose piety was naturall, whose charity was operative, whose policy was just and valiant, and whose æconomie was sincere and proportionable to the dispositions and requisites of nature. And in this particular the good women of * old, gave one of their instances; the greatest personages nursed their own children, did the work of Mothers, and thought it was unlikely, women should become vertuous by ornaments and superadditions of morality, who did decline the laws and prescriptions of nature, whose principles supply us with the first, and most common rules of manners and more perfect actions. In imitation of whom, and especially of the Virgin *Mary* who was *mother* and *nurse* to the holy JESUS, I shall endeavour to correct those softnesses and unnaturall rejections of children, which are popular up to a custome and fashion, even where no necessities of nature or just reason can make excuse.

And I cannot think the Question despicable, and the duty of meanest consideration, although it be specified in an office of small esteem, and suggested to us by the principles of reason, and not by expresse fancies of divinity. For although other actions are more perfect and spirituall, yet this is more naturall and humane; other things being superadded to a full duty rise higher, but this builds stronger, and is like a part of the foundation having no lustre but much strength, and however the others are full of ornament, yet this hath in it some degrees of necessity, and possibly is with more danger and irregularity omitted, then actions which spread their leaves fairer, and look more gloriously.

1 Here I first consider, that there are many sins in the scene of the body, and the matter of sobriety, which are highly criminall, and yet the laws of GOD expressed in scripture name them not; but men are taught to distinguish them by that reason which is given us by nature and is imprinted in our understanding in order to the conservation of humane kinde. For since every creature hath something in it sufficient to propagate the kinde, and

1.

* Quod si pudica
males in partem ju-
vet comum, atq; duc-
et liberos :
sabina qualis, aut
penatibus pernic-
tis uxor Appali
Non ne lacrima in-
venit concubitus ma-
gis, &c. Hor. 1. 1. 2.

2.

3.

Partim, ὅτι
καὶ πᾶσι ἀν-
θρώποις ἐστὶν
ἀντιθέτως,
partim, ὅτι πρὸς
καλοὺς ἀνθρώπους
καὶ ἀπὸ αὐτῶν, ὅτι
μὴ ἐκείνους ἀν-
θρώπους ὅτι ἀν-
θρώποις ἐστὶν.
Ἰσχυρὸν ὁμοίαν. 16.
c. 10.

to conserve the individuals from perishing in confusions and generall disorders, which in beasts we call *instinct*, that is, an habituall or prime disposition to do certain things which are proportionable to the end whither it is designed; man also, if he be not more imperfect, must have the like, and because he knows and makes reflections upon his own acts, and understands the reason of it, that which in them is *instinct*, in him, is *naturall reason*, which is, a desire to preserve himself and his own kinde, and differs from *instinct*, because he understands his *instinct* and the reasonableness of it, and they do not. But because man being a higher thing even in the order of creation and designed to a more noble end, in his animall capacities, his *argumentative instinct* is larger then the *naturall instinct* of beasts; for he hath instincts in him in order to the conservation of society; and therefore hath principles, that is, he hath naturall desires to it for his own good; and because he understands them, they are called *principles*, and *Laws of nature*, but are no other then what I have now declared. For beasts do the same things we do, and have many the same inclinations, which in us are the laws of nature, even all, which we have in order to our common end. But that which in beasts is *nature*, and an impulsive force, in us must be duty and an inviting power; we must do the same things with an actuall or habituall designation of that end, to which GOD designs beasts (supplying by his wisdom their want of understanding) and then what is *meer nature* in them, in us is *naturall reason*. And therefore marriage in men is made sacred, when the mixtures of other creatures are so meerly naturall, that they are not capable of being virtuous, because men are bound to intend that end which GOD made, and this with the superaddition of other ends, of which marriage is representative in part, and in part effective, does consecrate marriage, and makes it holy and mysterious. But then there are in marriage many duties, which we are taught by instinct; that is, by that reason, whereby we understand, what are the best means to promote the end, which we have assigned us. And by these laws all unnaturall mixtures are made unlawfull, and the decencies, which are to be observed in marriage are prescribed by this.

4.

2. Upon the supposition of this discourse I consider again, that although to observe this instinct, or these laws of nature (in which I now have instanced) be no great virtue in any eminency of degree (as no man is much commended for not killing himself, or for not degenerating into beastly lusts) yet to prevaricate some of these laws may become almost the greatest sin of the world. And therefore although to live according to nature be a testimony fit to be given to a sober and a temperate man, and rises no higher; yet to do an action against nature is the greatest dishonour and impiety in the world (I mean of actions whose scene lies in the body) and disentitles us to all relations to GOD, and vicinity to virtue.

5.

3. Now amongst actions which we are taught by nature; some concern the being and the necessities of nature: some appertain to her convenience and advantage, and the transgressions of these respectively

spectively have their heightnings or depressions; and therefore to kill a man is worse then some praternaturall pollutions, because more destructive of the end and designation of nature, and the purpose of instinct.

4. Every part of this instinct is then *in some sense* a law, when it is in a direct order to a necessary end, and by that is made, is reasonable. I say [in some sence] it is a law, that is, it is in a neer disposition to become a law. It is a rule without obligation to a particular punishment, beyond the effect of the naturall inordination and obliquity of the act; it is not the measure of a morall good or evil; but of the naturall; that is, of comely and uncomely. For if in the individualls it should fail, or that there passe some greater obligation upon the person in order to a higher end, not consistent with those means design'd in order to the lesser end, in that particular it is no fault, but sometimes a vertue. And therefore although it be an instinct, or reasonable towards many purposes, that every one should beget a man in his own image, in order to the preservation of nature, yet if there be a superaddition of another and higher end, and contrary means perswaded in order to it (such as is holy celibate or virginity in order to a spirituall life in some persons) there the instinct of nature is very far from passing obligation upon the conscience; and in that instance ceases to be reasonable. And therefore the Romans, who invited men to marriage with priviledges, and punished morose and ungente natures, that refused it, yet they had their chaste and unmarried Vestalls, the first in order to the Common wealth, these in a neerer order to religion.

5. These instincts or reasonable inducements become laws obliging us in conscience and in the way of religion, and the breach of them is directly criminall when the instance violates any end of justice or charity, or sobriety either design'd in natures first intention, or superinduced by GOD or man. For every thing that is unreasonable to some certain purpose is not presently criminall, much lesse is it against the law of nature (unlesse every man that goes out of his way sins against the law of nature,) and every contradicting of a naturall desire or inclination is not a sin against a law of nature. For the restraining some times of a lawfull and a permitted desire is an act of a great vertue, and pursues a greater reason; as in the former instance; but those things onely, against which such a reason as mixes with charity or justice, or something that is now in order to a further end of a commanded instance of piety, may be without error brought, those things are onely criminall. And GOD having first made our instincts reasonable, hath now made our reason and instincts to be spirituall, and having some times restrained our instincts and alwayes made them regular, he hath by the intermixture of other principles made a separation of instinct from instinct, leaving one in the forme of naturall inclination, and they rise no higher then a permission or a decency, it is lawfull, or it is comely so to do: (for no man can affirm it to be a *duty* to kill him, that assaults my life, or to maintain my children for ever without their own industry, when they are able, what degrees of naturall fondnesse soever I have towards them; nor that I sin, if I do not marry, when I can contain:) and yet every one of these may proceed from the affections and first inclinations of nature; but untill they mingle with justice, or charity, or some instance of religion and obedience, they are no

laws, the other that are so mingled being raised to duty, andre ligation. Nature inclines us, and reason judges it apt and requisite in order to certain ends, but then every particular of it is made to be an act of religion from some other principle: as yet, it is but *fit* and reasonable, not religion and particular duty, till GOD or man hath interposed. But whatsoever particular in nature was fit to be made a Law of religion is made such by the superaddition of another principle; and this is derived to us by tradition from *Adam* or *Noah*, or else transmitted to us by the consent of all the world upon a naturall and prompt reason, or else by some other instrument derived to us from GOD but especially by the Christian religion, which hath adopted all those things, which we call *things honest, things comely* and *things of good report*, into a law and a duty as appears *Philippians* 4. verse 2.

2.

Upon these propositions I shall infer by way of instance, that it is a duty that women should nurse their own children. For first it is taught to Women by that instinct which nature hath implanted in them. For as *Phavorinus* the Philosopher discoursed, it is but to be *half* a Mother to bring forth Children and not to nourish them; and it is some kinde of abortion or an exposing of the infant, which in the reputation of all wise nations is infamous and uncharitable. And if the name of Mother be an appellative of affection, and indeernments, why should the Mother be willing to divide it with a stranger? The Earth is the Mother of us all, not onely because we were made of her red clay, but chiefly that she daily gives us food from her bowels and breasts: and plants and beasts give nourishment to their offsprings after their production with greater tendernesse, then they bare them in their wombs: and yet Women give nourishment to the Embryo, which whether it be deformed or perfect they know not, and cannot love what they never saw, and yet when they do see it, when they have rejoyced that a Childe is born, and forgotten the sorrows of production, they who then can first begin to love it, if they begin to divorce the infant from the Mother, the Object from the affection, cut of the opportunities and occasions of their charity or piety.

Apud A. Gellium.
L. 12. c. 1.

9.

For why hath nature given to Women two exuberant fontinells which like two *Roes* that are *winnes feed among the Lilies*, and drop milk like dew from *Hermon*, and hath invited that nourishment from the secret recesses where the infant dwelt at first, up to the breast where naturally now the childe is cradled in the entertainments of love and maternall embraces; but that nature having removed the Babe and carried its meat after it, intends that it should be preserved by the matter and ingredients of its constitution, and have the same diet prepared with a more mature and proportionable digestion? If nature intended them not for nourishment, I am sure it lesse intended them for pride and wantonnesse; they are needlesse excrescencies and vices of nature, unlesse employed in natures work and proper intendment. And if it be a matter of consideration of what blood children are derived; we may also consider that the derivation continues

after

after the birth, and therefore bating the sensuality, the Nurse is as much the Mother, as she that brought it forth, and so much the more, as there is a longer communication of constituent nourishment (for so are the first emanations) in this then in the other. So that here is first the instinct or prime intendment of Nature.

2. And that this instinct may also become humane and reasonable, we see it by experience in many places, that *Foster-children* are dearer to the *Nurse* then to the *Mother*, as receiving and ministring respectively, perpetual prettinesses of love, and fondness, and trouble, and need, and invitations, and all the instruments of indeerment, besides a vicinity of dispositions, and relative tempers by the communication of blood and spirits from the Nurse to the suckling, which makes *use* the more natural and *nature* more accustomed: And therefore the affections, which these exposed and derelict children bear to their Mothers, have no grounds of nature or assiduity, but * civility and opinion; and that little of love which is abated from the Foster-parents upon publick report that they are not natural, that little is transferred to Mothers upon the same opinion, and no more. Hence comes those unnatural aversions, those unrelenting dispositions, those carelessnesses and incurious deportments towards their children, which are such ill-sown seeds from whence may arise up a bitterness of disposition and mutual provocation. Sometimes children are exchanged and artificial bastardies introduced into a family, and the right heir supplanted; at the best, though there happen no such extravagant and rare accidents, yet it is not likely a *stranger* should love the child better then the *Mother*; and if the Mothers care could suffer it to be exposed, a strangers care may suffer it to be neglected. For how shall a hireling indure the inconveniencies, the tediousnesses and unhandsonnesses of a nursery; when she, whose natural affection might have made it pleasant, out of wantonness or softness hath declined the burden. But the sad accidents, which by too frequent observation are daily seen hapning to Nurse-children, give great probation that this intendment of Nature designing Mothers to be the Nurses, that their affection might secure and increase their care, and the care best provide for the babes, is most reasonable and proportionable to the discourses of humanity.

But as this instinct was made reasonable, so in this also the reason is in order to grace and spiritual effect; and therefore is among those things which GOD hath separated from the common instincts of nature, and made properly to be lawes by the mixtures of Justice and Charity. For it is part of that education which Mothers as a duty owe to their children, that they do in all circumstances, and with all their powers which GOD to that purpose gave them, promote their capacities and improve their faculties: * Now in this also, as the temper of the body is considerable in order to the inclinations of the soul, so is the Nurse in order to the temper of the body; and a Lamb sucking a Goat, or a Kid sucking of an Ewe, change their fleece and hair respectively, say Naturalists. For if the soul of a Man were put into the body of a Mole, it could not see nor speak, because it is not fitted with an instrument apt and organical to the faculty; and when the soul hath its proper instruments, its musick is pleasant or harsh according to the sweetness or the unevenness of the string it touches; For David himself could not have charm'd Saul's melancholy spirit with the strings

10.

* Obliteratis & abolitis nativis pietatis elementis quicquid ita educati liberi amare patrem acque Matrem violentius & magis patrem una naturalis illi amor est, sed civilis & opinabilis, Phavor. apud A. Gellium.

11.

* Nam Græcorum eloquentia multum consuevit acriterum Consilium Matrem, Synchitid. i. c. 1. Præstus & ex ipso patens factus, acrum quam maxime eorum impendat. Antroponia ne sit visus sermo Natus: ita, quas si fieri poterat, phores. Cyprianus narravit, Daniel. l. 1. c. 12.

of his Bowe, or the wood of his Spear. And just so, are the actions or dispositions of the soul, angry or pleasant, lustful or cold, quietulous or passionate, according as is the body disposed by the various intermixtures of natural qualities; and as the carelesse of Nurfs have sometimes returned children to their Parents, crooked, consumptive, half starved, and unclean from the impurities of Nature: So their society and their nourishment together have disposed them to peevishnesse, to lust, to drunkennesse, to pride, to low and base demeanours, to stubbornnesse: and as a Man would have been unwilling to have had a childe by Harpasse, Senecas wives fool: so he would in all reason be as unwilling to have had her to be the Nurse; For very often, Mothers by the birth do not transmit their imperfections, yet seldom it happens but the Nurse does. Which is the more considerable, because Nurfs are commonly persons of no great rank, certainly lower then the Mother, and by consequence liker to return their children with the lower and more servile conditions; & commonly those vainer people teach them to be peevish, and proud, to lye, or at least seldom give them any first principles contrariant to the Nurfs vice. And therefore it concerns the Parents care, in order to a virtuous and virtuous life of the childe, to secure its first seasonings; because, what ever it sucks in first, it swallows and believes infinitely, and practises easily, and continues longest. And this is most proper for a Mothers care, while the Nurse thinks that giving the childe suck, and keeping its body clean is all her duty. But the Mother cannot think her self so easily discharged. And this consideration is material in all cases, be the choice of the Nurse never so prudent and curious; it is not easily apprehended to be the portion of her care to give it spiritual milk, and therefore it intrenches very much upon impiety and positive relinquishing the education of their children, when Mothers expose the spirit of the childe, either to its own weaker inclinations, or the wicked principles of an ungodly Nurse, or the carelesse of any lesse obliged person.

And then let me adde, that a childe sucks the Nurfs milk and digests her conditions if they be never so * bad, seldom gets any good: For Vertue being superaddition to Nature and perfections not radical in the body, but contradictions to, and meliorations of natural indispositions, does not easily convey it self by ministrations of food, as vice does, which in most instances is nothing but meer nature grown to custom, and not mended by Grace; so that it is probable enough such natural distemperatures may passe in the rivulets of milk, like evil spirits in a white garment, when virtues are of harder purchase, and dwell so low in the heart, that they but rarely passe through the fountains of generation. And therefore let no Mother venture her childe upon a stranger whose heart she lesse knows then her own: and because few of those nicer women think better of others then themselves, (since out of self-love they neglect their own bowels) it is but an act of improvidence to let my childe derive imperfections from one of whom I have not so good an opinion as of my self.

And if those many blessings and holy prayers which the childe needs, or his askings or sicknesses, or the Mothers fears or joyes respectively do occasion, should not be cast into this account; yet those principles, which in all cases wherein the neglect is virtuous, are the causes of the exposing the childe, are extremely against the piety and charity of Christian Religion; which

* Annot. malign
miles digne, 21-
do te mēte.
Elium pēdib.

12.

* hincant, adno-
vult ubi atq. let.
p. 2.

13.

which prescribes severity and austere deportment, and the labours of love and exemplar tenderness of affections, and piety to children, which are the most natural and nearest relations the Parents have. That religion which commands us to visit and to tend sick strangers, and wash the feet of the poor, and dress their ulcers, and sends us upon charitable embassies into unclean prisons, and bids us lay down our lives for one another, is not pleased with a niceness and sensual curiosity (that I may not name the wantonnesses of lusts) which denies suck to our own children. What is more humane and affectionate then Christianity? and what is less natural and charitable then to deny the expresses of a Mothers affection; which certainly to good women is the greatest trouble in the world, and the greatest violence to their desires, if they should not expresse and minister?

And it would be considered; whether those Mothers, who have neglected their first duties of piety and charity, can expect so prompt and easie returns of duty and piety from their children, whose best foundation is love, and that love strongest, which is most natural, and that most natural which is conveyed by the first ministeries and impreses of nourishment and education? And if love descends more strongly then it ascends, and commonly falls from the parents upon the children in Cataracts, and returns back again up to the Parents but in gentle dewes; if the childes affections keeps the same proportions toward such unkinde Mothers; it will be as little as atoms in the Sun, and never expresse it self but when the Mother needs it not, that is, in the Sun-shine of a clear fortune.

This then is amongst those instincts which are natural, heightened first by reason, and then exalted by grace into the Obligation of a law; and being amongst the sanctions of nature, its prevarication is a crime very neer those sins, which Divines, in detestation of their malignity, call *sins against nature*; and is never to be excused, but in cases of necessity, or greater charity, as when the Mother cannot be a Nurse, by reason of natural disability, or be afflicted with a disease, which might be transmitted in the milk, or in case of the publick necessities of a Kingdom, for the securing of succession in the Royal Family. In other cases, the crime lies at their door who inforce neglect upon the other, and is heightened in proportion to the motive of the omission; as if wantonness or pride be the parent of the crime, the issue, besides its natural deformity, hath the expressencies of pride or lust to make it more ugly.

To such Mothers I propound the example of the holy Virgin, who had the honour to be visited by an Angel, yet after the example of the Saints in the Old Testament, she gave to the holy JESUS drink from those bottles which himself had filled for his own drinking; and her paps were as surely blessed for giving him suck, as her womb for bearing him; and reads a Lecture of piety and charity, which if we deny to our own children, there is then in the world left no argument or relation great enough to kindle it from a cindre to a flame. GOD gives *dry breasts* for a curse to some, for an affliction to others; but those that invite it to them by voluntary arts, *Love not blessing, therefore shall it be far from them*. Let none therefore divide the interests of their own children; for she that appeared before Solomon and would have the childe divided, was not the true Mother, and was the more culpable of the two.

14.

15.

* *recausatur matrem
imbecillitas homi-
nis patrociniis
quicquid cogit cau-
culat. Seneca.*

16.

THE PRAYER.

O Holy and Eternal GOD, Father of the Creatures, and King of all the World, who hast imprinted in all the sonnes of thy Creation, principles and abilities to serve the end of their own preservation, and to Men hast superadded Reason; making those first propensities of nature to be reasonable in order to society, and a conversation in communities and bodies politick; and hast by several laws and revelations directed our reasons to neerer applications to thee, and performance of thy great end, the glory of our Lord and Father. Teach me strictly to observe the order of Creation, and the designs of the Creatures; that in my order I may do that service, which every creature does in its proper capacity, LORD let me be as constant in the wayes of Religion, as the Sun in his course; as ready to follow the intimations of thy Spirit, as little birds are to obey the directions of thy Providence and the conduct of thy hand; and let me never by evil customs or vain company, or false persuasions, extinguish those principles of morality, and right reason which thou hast imprinted in my understanding, in my creation and education, and which thou hast ennobled by the superadditions of Christian institution; that I may live according to the rules of Nature in such things which she teaches, modestly, temperately, and affectionately, in all the parts of my naturall and Politicall relations; and that I proceeding from nature to grace, may henceforth go on from grace to glory, the crown of all obedience, prudent and holy walking, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The



SECT. 4.

Of the great and glorious accidents happning about the birth of JESVS.

ALthough the birth of CHRIST was destitute of the usuall ex-
crecencies and lesse necessary Pomps which used to signifie
and illustrate the birth of Princes ; yet his first humility was
made glorious with presages, miracles, and significations from
heaven, which did not onely, like the furniture of a Princely
Bedchamber, speak the riches of the Parent or greatnesse of the Son
within its own wals, but did declare to all the world that their Prince was
born, publishing it with figures and representments almost as great as its
Empire.

For when all the world did expect that in *Judea* should be born their
prince, and that the incredulous world had in their observation slipt by their
true Prince, because he came not in pompous and secular illustrations ;
upon that very stock *Vespasian* was nurs'd up in hope of the Roman Empire,
and that hope made him great in designs, and they being prosperous made
his fortunes correspond to his hopes, and he was indeer'd and engaged
upon that fortune by the Prophecy, which was never intended him by
the Prophet. But the fortune of the Roman Monarchy was not great
enough for this Prince design'd by the Old Prophets. And therefore it was
not without the influence of a Divinity that his Deceffor *Augustus* about
the time of CHRIST'S nativity refused to be called *Lord* ; possibly it was to
entertain the people with some hopes of restitution of their liberties, till
he had grip'd the Monarchy with a stricter and faster hold ; but the
Christians were apt to beleeeve that it was upon the prophecy of a *Sybill* fore-
telling the birth of a greater Prince, to whom all the world should pay
adoration ; and that the Prince was about that time born in *Judea*, the
oracle which was dumb to *Augustus* Question, told him unask'd, the Devil
having no tongue permitted him, but one to proclaim that an *Hebrew childe*
was his Lord and enemy.

At the birth of which childe there was an univerfall peace through all
the world. For he that was born was the Prince of peace, and came to re-
concile God with man, and man with his brother ; and to make by the
sweetnesse of his example, and the influence of a holy doctrine such
happy atonements between disagreeing natures, such confederations
and

1.

2.

Saeton. in vita Vesp.
Vide etiam Cicero-
de Divin.

Or. li. 6. c. 22.

Suidas in histor.
Verb. Augustus.

3.

Sect. 4.

and societies between Enemies, that the *Wo's* and the *Lamb* should lie down together and a little childe should boldly and without danger put his finger in the nest and cavern of an *Aspick*; and it could be no lesse then miraculous, that so great a body as the *Roman Empire*, consisting of so many parts, whose constitutions were differing, their humours contrary, their interests contradicting each others greatnesse, and all these violently oppressed by an usurping power, should have no limb out of joynt nor so much as an aking tooth, or a rebelling humour in that huge collection of parts: but so it seemed good in the eye of heaven by so great and good a symbole to declare not onely the greatnesse but the goodnesse of the Prince, that was then born in *Judea* the Lord of all the World.

4. But because the heavens as well as the earth are his Creatures and do serve him, at his Birth he received a signe in heaven above, as well as in the earth beneath as an homage paid to their common Lord. For as certain Shepherds were keeping watch over their flocks by night, neer that part where *Jacob* did use to feed his cattell when he was in the land of *Canaan*, the Angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them. Needs must the shepherds be afraid, when an Angel came arrayed in glory and clothed their persons in a robe of light, great enough to confound their senses and scatter their understandings. But the Angel said unto them, *Fear not, for I bring unto you tidings of great joy which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour which is Christ the Lord.* The shepherds needed not be invited to go see this glorious sight; but lest their fancy should rise up to an expectation of a Prince as externally glorious as might be hoped for upon the consequence of so glorious an apparition, the Angel to prevent the mistake told them of a signe, which indeed was no other then the thing signified; but yet was therefore a signe, because it was so remote from the common probability and expectation of such a birth, that by being a miracle, so great a Prince should be born so poorly, it became an instrument to signifie it self and all the other parts of mysterious consequence. For the Angel said, *this shall be a signe unto you, Ye shall finde the Babe wrapt in swaddling clothes lying in a manger.*

5. But as light, when it first begins to guild the east, scatters indeed the darkneses from the earth, but ceases not to increase its flame, till it hath made perfect day; so it hapned now in this apparition of the Angel of light, he appeared and told his Message and did shine, but the light arose higher and higher till midnight was as bright as midday; for suddenly there was with the Angel a multitude of the heavenly host, and after the Angel had told his Message in plain song, the whole chorus joyned in descant and sang a hymn to the tune and sense of heaven, where glory is paid to God in eternall and never ceasing offices, and whence good will descends upon men in perpetuall and never stopping torrents, their song was, *Glory be to God on high, on earth peace, good will towards men.*

6. As soon as these blessed Choristers had sung their Christmas caroll, and taught the Church a hymn to put into her offices for ever, in the anniversary of this festivity, the Angels returned into heaven, and the shepherds went to *Bethlehem* to see this thing which the Lord had made known unto them. And they came with hast and found *Mary* and *Joseph*; and the Babe lying in a manger: Just as the Angel had prepared their expectation they found the narrative verified

verified, and saw the glory and the mystery of it by that representation which was made by the heavenly Ministers, seeing GOD through the veil of a childes flesh, the Heir of heaven wrapt in swaddling clothes, and a person to whom the Angels did minister laid in a manger; and they beheld and wondred and worshipped.

But as precious liquour, warm'd and heightned by a flame, first crowns the vessell, and then dances over its brim into the fire, increasing the cause of its own motion and extravagancie: so it hapned to the shepherds, whose hearts being filled with the oil of gladnesse up unto the brim, the joy ran over, as being too big to be confin'd in their own breasts, and did communicate it self, growing greater by such dissemination. *For when they had seen it they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.* And (as well they might) *all that heard it wondred.* But *Mary*, having first changed her joy into wonder, turned her wonder into entertainments of the mystery, and the mystery into a fruition and cohabitation with it. *For Mary kept all these sayings and pondered them in her heart.* And the shepherds having seen what the Angels did upon the publication of the new, which lesse concerned them then us, had learnt their duty to sing an honour to GOD for the nativity of CHRIST, for the shepherds returned glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen as it was told unto them.

But the Angels had told the shepherds that the nativity was glad tidings of great joy unto all people; and that the heavens might declare the glory of God and the firmament shew his handy work, this also was told abroad even to the Gentiles by a signe from heaven, by the message of a star. For there was a Prophecy of Balaam famous in all the Eastern countrey and recorded by Moses. *Toere shall come a star out of Jacob and a scepter shall rise out of Israel, out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion.* And in expectation of the event of this prophecy, the Persians and Caldees, who were great lovers of Astro-nomy, did with diligence expect the revelation of a mighty Prince in Judea at such time when a miraculous and extraordinary star should appear. And therefore when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the dayes of Herod the King, there came wisemen inspired by God, taught by art, and perswaded by prophecy from the east to Jerusalem, saying, *Where is he that is born King of the Jews; for we have seen his star in the East and are come to worship him.*

This star did not trouble Herod, till the Levantine princes expounded the mysteriouse of it, and said it declared a King to be born in *Jury*, and that the star was *his*, not applicable to any signification but of a Kings birth. And therefore although it was* no prodigy nor Comet foretelling diseases, plagues, war and death but onely the happy birth of a most excellent Prince, yet it brought affrightment to Herod and all Jerusalem, for when Herod the King had heard these things he was troubled and all Jerusalem with him. And thinking that the Question of the kingdom was now in dispute, and an Heir sent from heaven to lay challenge to it, who brought a star and the learning of the East with him for evidence and probation of his title, Herod thought there was no security to his usurped possession, unlesse he could rescind the decrees of heaven, and reverse the results and eternall counsels of predestination. And he was resolved to venture it, first by craft, and then by violence.

And first, he calls the chief Priests and Scribes of the people together, and de-
manded

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Num. 24. 17.

9-

* Chalch'in ind Eim
morum Placitum.

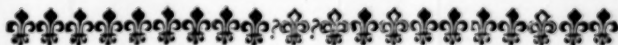
10.

under infant Innocency; the Almighty power in so great weaknesse, and under the lownesse of humane nature, the altitude of Majesty and the infinity of Divine Glory. And so was verified the prediction of the Prophet *Esay* under the type of the son of the Prophetesse, *Before a child shall have knowledge to cry, My Father and my Mother, he shall take the spout of Damascus and Samaria, from before the King of Assyria.*

When they had paid the tribute of their offerings and adoration, Being warned in their sleep by an Angel not to return to Herod, they returned into their own country another way, where having been Satisfied with the Pleasures of Religion, and taught by that rare demonstration which was made by CHRIST, how Mans happinesse did nothing at all consist in the affluence of worldly possessions, or the tumours of honour, having seen the Eternal Son of GOD poor and weak, and unclothed of all exteriour Ornaments, they renounced the World, and retired empty into the recesses of Religion, and the delights of philosophy.

179 24.
Julia M. Dial. om.
Troyhon.
Festalt. 1. 3. contr.
Marcion. 4. 13.

23-



Ad. Sect. 4.

Considerations upon the apparition of the Angels to the Shepherds.



When the Angels saw that come to passe which *Gabriel* the great Embassadour of GOD had declared, that which had been prayed for and expected four thousand yeers, and that by the merits of this new-born Prince, their younger brethren and inferiours in the order of intelligent creatures were now to be redeemed, that Men should partake the glories of their secret habitations, and should fill up those void places which the fall of *Lucifer* and the third part of the Stars had made, their joy was great as their understanding, and these mountains did leap with joy, because the valleys were filled with benediction and a fruitful shower from Heaven. And if at the conversion of one sinner there is jubilation and a festival kept among the Angels, how great shall we imagine this rejoycing to be, when *Salvation and Redemption* was sent to all the World? But we also to whom the joy did more personally relate (for they rejoyced for our sakes) should learn to estimate the grace done us, and believe there is something very extraordinary in the piety and salvation of a Man, when the Angels who in respect of us are unconcern'd in the communications, rejoyce with the joy of Conquerours, or persons suddenly ransomed from tortures and death.

But the Angels also had other motions; for besides the pleasures of that joy which they had in beholding humane nature so highly exalted, and that GOD was Man and Man was GOD; they were transported with admiration at the ineffable Counsel of GODS predestination, prostrating themselves with adoration and modesty, seeing GOD so humbled, and Man so changed, and so full of charity, that GOD stooped to the condition of Man,

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Man, and Man was inflamed beyond the love of Seraphims, and was made more knowing then Cherubims, more established then thrones, more happy then all the orders of Angels. The issue of this consideration teaches us to learn their *charity*, and to exterminate all the intimations and beginnings of *envy*, that we may as much rejoyce at the good of others as of our selves; for then we love good for GODS sake when we love good where ever GOD hath placed it; and that joy is charitable which overflows our neighbours fields, when our selves are unconcerned in the personal accrue-ments; for so we are *made partakers of all that fear God*, when charity unites their joy to ours, as it makes us partakers of their common sufferings.

3. And now the Angels, who had adored the holy JESUS in Heaven, come also to pay their homage to him upon earth; and laying aside their flaming swords, they take into their hands instruments of musick, and sing, *Glory be to God on high*. First, signifying to us that the Incarnation of the holy JESUS, was a very great instrument of the glorification of GOD, and those divine perfections in which he is chiefly pleased to communicate himself to us, were in nothing manifested so much as in the mysteriouse selfe of this work. Secondly, and in vain does Man satisfie himself with complacencies and ambitious designes upon earth, when he sees before him, GOD in the form of a servant, humble and poor, and crying, and an infant full of need and weaknesse.

4. But GOD hath pleased to reconcile his glory with our eternal benefit, and that also was part of the Angels song, *In earth peace to men of good will*. For now we need not with Adam to flye from the presence of the LORD, saying, *I heard thy voice and I was afraid and hid my self*; for he, from whom our sins made us once to flye, now weeps, and is an infant in his Mothers arms, seeking strange means to be reconciled to us, hath forgotten all his anger and is swallowed up with love, and incircled with irradiations of amorous affections and good will: and the effects of this good will are not referred onely to persons of heroical and eminent graces and operations of vast and expensive charities, of prodigious abstinencies, of heremittical retirements, of ascetical diet, of perfect religion and canoniz'd persons, but to all *men of good will*, whose souls are hallowed with holy purposes and pious desires, though the beauties of the religion, and holy thoughts, were not spent in exterior acts, nor called out by the opportunities of a rich and expressive fortune.

5. But here we know where *the seat and regiment of peace* is placed, and all of it must passe by us and descend upon us as duty and reward. It proceeds from the word Incarnate, from the Son of GOD undertaking to reconcile us to his Father; and it is ministred and consign'd unto us by every event and act of providence, whether it be deciphered in characters of paternal indulgence, or of correction, or absolution: For that is not peace from above, to have all things according to our humane and natural wishes; but to be in favour with GOD, *that is peace*; alwayes remembering that, to be chastised by him, is not a certain testimony of his meet wrath, but to all his servants a *character of love*, and of paternal provision, since *he chastises every son whom he receives*. Whosoever seeks to avoid all this worlds adversity, can never finde peace: but he onely who hath resolved all his affections and placed them in the heart of GOD, he who denies his own will, and hath kill'd self-love, and all those enemies within that make afflictions

to become miseries indeed and full of bitterness, he only enjoys this peace, and in proportion to every mans mortification and self denial, so are the degrees of his peace; and this is *the peace* which the Angel proclaimed at the enunciation of that birth which taught humility and contempt of things below, and all its vainer glories by the greatest argument in the world, even the poverty of GOD Incarnate. And if GOD sent his own natural onely begotten and beloved Son, in all the dreses of poverty and contempt; that person is vain, who thinks GOD will love him better then he loved his own Son, or that he will expresse his love any other or gentler way then to make him partaker of the fortune of his eldest Son. There is one other postern to the dwellings of peace, and that is, *good will to Men*, for so much charity as we have to others, such a measure of peace also we may enjoy at home: For peace was onely proclaim'd to Men of good will, to them that are at peace with GOD and all the World.

But the Angel brought the message to Shepherds, to persons simple and mean, and humble; persons likely to be more apprehensive of the mystery and lesse of the scandal, of the poverty of the *Messias*: for they whose custom or affections dwell in secular pomps, who are not used by charity or humility to stoop to an evenesse and consideration of their brethren, of equal natures though of unequal fortunes; are persons of all the world most indisposed & removed from the understanding of spiritual excellencies, especially when they do not come clothed with advantages of the world, and of such beauties which they admire. GOD himself in poverty comes in a prejudice to them that love riches, and *simplicity is folly to crafty persons, a mean birth is an ignoble stain, beggery is a scandal, and the Crosse an answerable objection. But the Angels moral in the circumstance of his addresse, and inviting the poor Shepherds to *Bethlehem*, is, That none are fit to come to CHRIST, but those who are poor in spirit, despisers of the world, simple in their hearts, without craft and secular designs; and therefore neither did the Angel tell the story to *Herod*, nor to the Scribes and Pharisees whose ambition had ends contradictory to the simplicity and poverty of the birth of JESUS.

These Shepherds when they conversed with Angels were watching over their flocks by night, no Revellers; but in a painful and dangerous employment, the work of an honest calling, securing their folds against incursions of wilde beasts, which in those Countries are not seldom, or infrequent. And CHRIST being the great Shepherd (and possibly for the analogies sake the sooner manifested to Shepherds,) hath made his Ministers overseers of their flocks, distinguished in their particular folds, and conveys the mysteriouse of his kingdom first to the Pastors, and by their ministry to the flocks; But although all of them be admitted to the Ministry, yet those onely to the interior recesses and neerer imitations of JESUS, who are watchfull over their flocks, assiduous in their labours, painful in their sufferings, present in the dangers of the sheep, ready to interpose their persons, and sacrifice their lives; these are Shepherds who first converse with Angels, and finally shall enter into the presence of the LORD. But besides this symbol, we are taught in the significations of the letter; That he that is diligent in the businesse of an honest calling, is then doing service to GOD, and a work so pleasing to him, who hath appointed the sons of Men to labour, that to these shepherds he made a return and recompence by the con-

versation

* At non virtutes ip-
sas laudamus, sed
singulorum cupimus
vas incrementi. Probus
quis
Nobilis vivit, mul-
torum demissus homo,
nil
Tando cognomen pin-
git damus
simplicior si quis - ut
sola legemur
Aut tacitum impellat
quavis sermone mo-
lestus
Communi sensu pla-
ne caret, in quibus-
dama. Sermon. l. i. Sat. 3.

versation of an Angel ; and hath advanced the reputation of an honest and a mean imployment to such a testimony of acceptance, that no honest person, though busied in meaner offices, may ever hereafter in the estimation of CHRIST'S disciples become contemptible.

2.

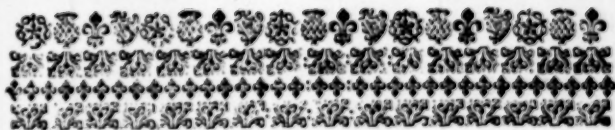
The signes which the Angel gave to discover the Babe were no marks of lustre and vanity, but they should finde, 1. A Babe. 2. Swaddled. 3. Lying in a manger. The first a testimony of his humility, the second of his poverty, the third of his incommmodity and uneasiness ; For CHRIST came to combat the whole body of Sin, and to destroy every Province of Satans Kingdom. For these are direct antinomies to the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. Against the first, CHRIST opposed his hard and uneasy lodging, against the second, the poornesse of his swaddling-bands and mantle, and the third is combated by the great dignation and descent of CHRIST from a throne of Majesty to the state of a sucking Babe. And these are the first Lessons he hath taught us for our imitation, which that we may the better do, as we must take him for our pattern, so also for our helper, and pray to the Holy Childe, and he will not onely teach us, but also give us power and ability.



The PRAYER.

O Blessed and eternal JESU, at whose birth the Quires of Angels sang praises to GOD, and proclaimed peace to Men, sanctifie my will and inferiour affections ; make me to be within the conditions of peace, that I be Holy and mortified, a Despisers of the world and exteriour vanities, humble and charitable ; that by thy eminent example I may be so fixed in the designs and prosecution of the ends of GOD, and a Blissfull Eternity, that I be unmoved with the terrors of the World, unaltered with its allurements and seductions, not ambitious of its honour, not desirous of its fulnesse and plenty ; but make me diligent in the imployment thou givest me, faithful in discharge of my trust, modest in my desires, content in the issues of thy Providence, that in such dispositions I may receive and entertain visitations from Heaven, and revelations of the mysteries and blisse Exangelical ; that by such directions I may be brought into thy presence, there to see thy beauties and admire thy graces, and imitate all thy imitable excellencies, and rest in thee for ever in this world by the perseverance of a holy and conformable life, and in the world to come in the participation of thy essential glories and felicities, O blessed and eternal JESUS. Amen.

Ad.



Ad. Sect. 4.

*Considerations of the Epiphany of the B. JESUS
by a Star, and the adoration of JESUS by
the Eastern Magi.*

GOD, who is the universal Father of all Men, at the Nativity of the *Messias* gave notice of it to all the World, as they were represented by the grand Division of Jews and Gentiles. To the Jewish Shepherds by an *Angel*, to the Eastern *Magi* by a *Star*. For the Gospel is of universal dissemination, not confined, within the limits of a nationall prerogative, but Catholick and diffused. As GODS love was, so was the dispensation of it, without respect of persons; for all being included under the curse of sin were to him equal and indifferent, undistinguishable objects of mercy. And JESUS descended of the Jews was also the *expellation of the Gentiles*, and therefore communicated to all: The grace of GOD being like the air we breathe, and it hath appeared to all men, saith Saint Paul; but the conveyances and communications of it were different in the degrees of clarity and illustration. The Angel told the Shepherds the story of the Nativity plainly and literally; The starre invited the Wise men by its rareness and preternatural apparition; to which also as by a soorpath they had been led by the Prophecy of *Balaam*.

But here first the grace of GOD prevents us; without him we can do nothing, he layes the first stone in every spiritual building; and then expects by that strength he first gave us, that we make the superstructures. But as a stone thrown into a River, first moves the water, and disturbs its surface into a Circle, and then its own force wasts the neighbouring drops into a larger figure by its proper weight: So is the grace of GOD, the first principle of our spiritual motion, and when it moves us into its own figure, and hath actuated and ennobled our natural powers by the influence of that first incentive, we continue the motion and enlarge the Progress; but as the Circles on the face of the Wa-

D

ters

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Tit 2. 11.

2.

J

Waters, growes weaker till it hath smooth'd it self into a naturall and even current, unlesse the force be renewed or continued: So do all our naturall endeavours, when first set a work by GODS preventing grace, decline to the imperfection of its own kinde, unlesse the same force be made energetical and operative by the continuation and renewing of the same supernatural influence.

3.

And therefore the Eastern Magi, being first raised up into wonder and curiosity, by the apparition of the Star, were very far from finding JESUS by such general and indefinite significations: but then the goodnesse of GODS grace increased its own influence; for an inspiration from the Spirit of GOD admonished them to observe the Star, shewed the Star that they might finde it, taught them to acknowledge it, instructed them to understand its purpose, and invited them to follow it; and never left them till they had found the holy JESUS. Thus also GOD deals with us. He gives us the first grace, and addes the second, he enlightens our understandings, and actuates our faculties, and sweetly allures us by the proposition of rewards, and wounds us with the arrows of his love, and inflames us with fire from Heaven; ever giving us new assistances, or increasing the old, refreshing us with comforts, or arming us with patience; sometime stirring our affections by the lights held out to our understanding, sometimes bringing confirmation to our understanding by the motion of our affections, till by variety of means we at last arrive at *Bethlehem*, in the service and entertainments of the holy JESUS. Which we shall certainly do, if we follow the invitations of grace and exterior assistances which are given us to instruct us, to help us, and to invite us, but not to force our endeavours and cooperations.

habet intellectum
et prestat suum
S. Loe for. i. Epiph.

4.

As it was an unsearchable wisdom, so it was an unmeasurable grace of Providence and dispensation which GOD did exhibit to the Wise men, to them as to all Men disposing the ministeries of his grace, sweetly, and by proportion to the capacities of the person suscipient. For GOD called the Gentiles by such means which their customes and learning had made prompt and easie. For these Magi were great Philosophers and Astronomers, and therefore GOD sent a miraculous starre to invite and lead them to a new and more glorious light; the lights of Grace and Glory. And GOD so blessed them in following the starre to which their innocent curiosity and national customes were apt to lead them; that their custom was chang'd to Grace, and their learning heightened with inspiration, and GOD crown'd all with a spiritual and glorious event. It was not much unlike, which GOD did to the Princes and Diviners among the Philistines, who sent the Ark back with five golden Emerods and five golden Mice; an act proportionable to the custom and sense of their Nation and Religion; yet GOD accepted their opinion and divination to the utmost end they design'd it, and took the plagues of Emerods and Mice from them: For oftentimes the custome or the Philosophy of the opinions of a Nation are made instrumentall through GODS acceptance, to ends higher then they can produce by their own Energy and intentment: And thus the Astrologicall divinations of the Magi were turned into the order of a greater designe then the whole art could promise, their employment

1 Sam. 6.

employment being altered into Grace, and Nature into a Miracle. But then when the Wise men were brought by this meanes and had seen JESUS, then GOD takes wayes more immediate and proportionable to the Kingdom of Grace: the next time, GOD speaks to them by an Angel. For so is GODS usuall manner to bring us to him; first, by wayes agreeable to us, and then to increase by wayes agreeable to himself. And when he hath furnished us with new capacities, he gives new lights in order to more perfect employments: And, *To him that hath, shall be given full measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over;* the eternal kindnesse of GOD being like the Sea, which delights to runne in its old Channell, and to fill the hollownesse of the Earth which it self hath made and hath once watered.

This Starre, which conducted the Wisemen to *Bethlehem*, was set in its place to be seen by all; but was not observed or not understood, nor its message obeyed by any but the three Wise men: and indeed no man hath cause to complain of GOD, as if ever he would be deficient in assistances necessary to his service, but first the grace of GOD separates us from the common condition of incapacity and indisposition, and then we separate our selves one from another by the use or neglect of this Grace, and GOD doing his part to us, hath cause to complain of us, who neglect that which is our portion of the work. And however even the issues and the kindnesse of GODS Predestination and antecedent mercy does very much toward the making the Grace to be effective of its purpose, yet the manner of all those influences, and operations being morall, perswasive, reasonable, and divisible; and by concurrence of various circumstances, the cause and the effect are brought neerer and neerer in various Sufcipients, but not brought so close together; but that GOD expects us to do * something towards it; so that we may say with Saint Paul, *It is not I, but the grace of God that is with me*; and at the same time, when by reason of our cooperation we actuate and improve GODS grace, and become distinguished from other persons, more negligent under the same opportunities, GOD is he, who also does distinguish us by the proportions and circumstantiate applications of his grace to every singular capacity; that we may be careful not to neglect the grace, and yet to return the entire glory to * GOD.

Although GOD, to second the generous designe of these wise personages in the Enquiry of the New Prince, made the starre to guide them through the difficulties of their journey, yet when they came to Jerusalem, the starre disappeared; GOD so resolving to try their Faith, and the activity of their desires; to remonstrate to them that GOD is the LORD of all his Creatures, and a voluntary Dispenser of his own favours, and can as well take them away as indolge them, and to engage them upon the use of ordinary means and ministeries when they are to be had; for now the extraordinary and miraculous Guide for a time did cease; that they being at Jerusalem might enquire of them, whose office and profession of sacred mysteries did oblige them to publish the MESSIAS. For GOD is so great a lover of order, so regular and certain an exactor of us to use those ordinary ministeries

ries of his own appointing, that he having used the extraordinary, but as Architects do frames of wood, to support the arches till they be built, takes them away when the work is ready, and leaves us to those other of his designation, and hath given such efficacy to these, that they are as perivasive and operative as a miracle; and S. Pauls Sermon would convert as many, as if *Moses* should rise from the grave; and now the doctrines of Christianity have not onely the same truth, but the same evidence and vertue also they had in the midst of those prime demonstrations extraordinary by miracle and prophecy, if Men were equally disposed.

7.

When they were come to the Doctors of the Jews they asked confidently, and with great opennesse, under the ear and eye of a Tyrant Prince, bloody and timorous, jealous and ambitious, *Where is he that is born King of the Jews?* And so gave evidence of their faith, of their magnanimity and fearless confidence and profession of it, and of their love of the mystery and object, in pursuance of which they had taken so troublesome and vexatious journeys: and besides that they upbraided the tepidity and infidel basenesse of the Jewish Nation, who stood unmoved and unconcerned by all the Circumstances of wonder, and stirred not one step to make enquiry after, or to visit the new-born King. They also teach us to be open and confident in our Religion and Faith, and not to consider our temporall, when they once come to contest against our Religious interests.

8.

The Doctors of the Jews told the Wise men where CHRIST was to be born, the *Magi* they addresse themselves with haste to see him, and to worship, and the Doctors themselves stirre not; GOD not onely serving himself with truth out of the mouthes of impious persons, but magnifying the recesses of his Counsell and Wisdome and Predestination, who uses the same Doctrine to glorifie himself and to confound his enemies, to save the Scholars, and to condemne the Tutors, to instruct one and upbraid the other; making it an instrument of Faith and a conviction of infidelity; the Sermons of the Doctors in such cases being like the spoiles of Bevers, Sheep, and Silkworms, designed to clothe others, and are made the occasions of their own nakednesse, and the causes of their Death. But as it is a Demonstration of the Divine Wisdome, so it is of humane folly; there being no greater imprudence in the World then to doe others advantage, and to neglect your own. *If thou doest well unto thy self men will speak good of thee:* But if thou beest like a Channell in a Garden, through which the water runnes, to coole and moisten the Herbs, but nothing for its own use; thou buildest a fortune to them upon the ruines of thine own house, while after thy preaching to others, thou thy self doest become a cast-away.

9.

When the Wisemen departed from Jerusalem the star again appeared, & they rejoyced with exceeding great joy; and indeed to new Converts & persons in their first addresses to the worship of GOD, such spiritual & exterior comforts

Plaga mortale che ti
non puo guarire, a
Vivere in altrui, &
in te stesso morire.

conforts are often indulged; because then GOD judges them to be most necessary, as being invitations to duty by the entertainments of our affections with such sweetnesses, which represent the glory of the reward by the antepasts and refreshments dispensed even in the ruggedness of the way and incommodities of the journey. All other delights are the pleasures of Beasts or the sports of children; these are the antepasts and preventions of the full feasts and overflowings of Eternity.

When they came to *Bethlehem*, and the Star pointed them to a Stable, they entered in, and being enlightened with a Divine ray proceeding from the face of the holy Childe, and seeing through the cloud, and passing through the scandal of his mean lodging, and poor condition, they bowed themselves to the earth; first giving *themselves* an oblation to this great King, then they made offering of their gifts; for a Mans person is first accepted, then his gift; GOD first regarded *Abel*, and then accepted his offering, which we are best taught to understand by the present instance; for it means no more, but that all outward services and oblations are made acceptable by the priour presentation of an inward sacrifice. If we have first presented our selves, then our gift is pleasant, as coming but to expresse the truth of the first sacrifice: but if our persons be not first made a Holocaust to GOD; the lesser oblations of outward presents are like Sacrifices without salt and fire, nothing to make them pleasant or religious. For all other senses of this proposition charge upon GOD the distinguishing and acceptation of persons, against which he solemnly protests. GOD regards no Mans person, but according to the doing of his duty; but then GOD is said first to accept the person, and then the gift, when the person is first sanctified and given to GOD by the vows and habits of a holy life, and then all the actions of his religion are homogeneous to their principle, and accepted by the acceptation of the Man.

These Magi presented to the holy Babe Gold, Frankincense and Myrrhe, professing their faith of three Articles by the symbolical oblation: By Gold, that he was a King, by Incense, that he was a GOD, by Myrrhe, that he was a Man; and the presents also were representative of interior virtues: The Myrrhe signifying Faith, Mortification, Chastity, Compunction, and all the actions of the purgative way of Spiritual life: The Incense signifying Hope, Prayer, Obedience, good Intention; and all the actions and Devotions of the Illuminative: The giving the Gold, representing love to GOD, and our Neighbours, the contempt of riches, Poverty of Spirit, and all the eminencies and spiritual riches of the unitive life; and these oblations if we present to the holy JESUS, both our persons and our gifts shall be accepted, our sins shall be purged, our understandings enlightened, and our wills united to this holy childe, and entitled to a communion of all his glories.

And thus in *one view* and *two instances*, GOD hath drawn all the World to himself by his Son JESUS; in the instance of the Shepherds and the Persian Magi Jews and Gentiles, Learned and unlearned, Rich and Poor, Noble and Ignoble; that in him all Nations, and all Conditions, and all Families, and all persons might be blessed, having called all by one Star or other, by natural reason, or by the secrets of Philosophy, by the Revelations of the Gospel, or by the ministry of Angels, by

10.

11.

12.

Nam fons vitæ, et
mi q; duri
Et huiusmodi
Nunc oves testis, duc
te gregem.
Pecus in aulam.
Nunc ubi quendam sa
crat ferarum
Nunc ibi ritus vige
Angelorum
Et laus iustus, qui
bus ipse laus
Vale in acria,
S. Paulinus in reditu
Nec.

the illuminations of the Spirit, or by Sermons, and Dictates of spiritual Fathers; and hath consigned this lesson to us, That we must never appear before the LORD empty; offering gifts to him by the expences, or by the affections of charity, either the worshipping, or the oblations of Religion, either the riches of the World, or the love of the Soul; for if we cannot bring gold with the rich Persians, we may with the poor Shepherds come and *kisse the Son lest he be angry*, and in all cases come and *serve him with fear and reverence*, and spiritual rejoycings.



The PRAYER.

Most holy JESU, thou art the glory of thy people Israel, and a light to the Gentiles, and wert pleased to call the Gentiles to the adoration and knowledge of thy sacred person and laws, communicating the inestimable riches of thy holy Discipline, to all, with an universal undistinguishing love; give unto us spirits docible, pious, prudent, and ductile, that no motion or invitation of grace be ineffectual, but may produce excellent effects upon us, and the secret whispers of thy spirit may prevail upon our affections in order to piety and obedience, as certainly as the loudest and most clamorous Sermons of the Gospel. Create in us such excellencies as are fit to be presented to thy glorious Majesty; accept of the oblation of my self, and my entire services; but be thou pleased to verifie my offering, and secure the possession to thy self, that the enemy may not pollute the sacrifice, or divide the gift, or question the title; but that I may be wholly thine, and for ever; clarifie my understanding, sanctifie my will, replenish my memory with arguments of piety, then shall I present to thee an oblation rich and precious as the treble gift of the Levantine Princes; LORD I am thine, reject me not from thy favour, exclude me not from thy presence, then shall I serve thee all the dayes of my life, and partake of the glories of thy Kingdom in which thou reignest gloriously and eternally. Amen.

Sect.

3.

But this holy Family who had laid up their joyes in the eyes and heart of GOD, long'd till they might be permitted an addresse to the Temple, that there they might present the holy Babe unto his Father; and indeed that he, who had no other, might be brought to his own house: For although, while he was a childe, he did differ nothing from a servant, yet he was the Lord of the place, *It was his Fathers house, and he was the Lord of all, and therefore when the dayes of the purification were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord; To whom he was holy as being the first born; the first born of his Mother, the only begotten Son of his Father, and the first born of every creature.* And they did with him according to the law of Moses, offering a pair of Turtle Doves for his redemption.

4.

But there was no publick act about this holy childe, but it was attended by something miraculous and extraordinary. And at this instant the Spirit of GOD directed a holy person into the Temple, that he might feel the fulfilling of a Prophecy made to himself, that he might before his death behold the LORD'S CHRIST, and imbrace the glory and consolation of Israel, and the light of the Gentiles in his arms, for old Simeon came by the Spirit into the Temple, and when the Parents brought in the childe JESUS, then took he him up in his arms and blessed GOD, and prophesied, and spake glorious things of that childe, and things sad and glorious concerning his Mother; that the childe was set for the rising and falling of many in Israel, for a signe that should be spoken against; and the bitterness of that contradiction should pierce the heart of the holy Virgin Mother like a sword, that her joy at the present accidents might be attemper'd with present revelation of her future trouble, and the excellent favour of being the Mother of GOD might be crowned with the reward of Martyrdom, and a Mothers love be rais'd up to an excellency great enough to make her suffer the bitterness of being transfix'd with his love and sorrow as with a sword.

5.

But old Anna the Prophetesse came also in, full of years, and joy, and found the reward of her long prayers and fasting in the Temple, the long looked for redemption of Israel was now in the Temple, and she saw with her eyes the Light of the World, the Heir of Heaven, the long looked for Messias whom the Nations had desired and expected till their hearts were faint, and their eyes dimm'd with looking further and apprehending greater distances: She also prophesied and gave thanks unto the Lord. But Joseph and his Mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him.



Ad. Sect. 5.

Considerations upon the Circumcision of the
bely childe JESUS.

When eight dayes were come, the holy JESUS was circumcised, and shed the first fruits of his blood, offering them to God like the pralibation of a sacrifice, and earnest of the great seas of effusion designed for his Passion, not for the expiation of any staine himself had contracted; for he was spotlesse as the face of the Sunne, and had contracted no wrinkle from the aged and polluted brow of *Adam*; but it was an act of obedience, and yet of choice and voluntary suscepcion, to which no obligation had passed upon him in the condition of his owne person: For as he was included in the vierge of *Abrahams* posterity, and had put on the common outside of his Nation, his Parents had intimation enough to passe upon him the Sacrament of the Nationall Covenant, and it became an act of excellent obedience; but because he was a person extraordinary, and exempt from the reasons of Circumcision, and himself in person was to give period to the rite, therefore it was an act of choice in him, and in both the capacities becomes a precelent of duty to us, in the first of obedience, in the second of humility.

But it is considerable, that the holy JESUS, who might have pleaded his exemption, especially in a matter of pain and dishonour, yet chose that way which was more severe and regular, so teaching us to be strict in our duties, and sparing in the rights of privilege and dispensation; every indisposition of body excuses us from penall duties, from fasting, from going to Church; and instantly we will satisfie our selves with saying, *God will have mercy and not sacrifice*; so making our selves Judges of our owne priviledges, in which commonly we are parties against God, and therefore likely to passe unequal sentence. It is not an easie argument that will bring us to the severities and rigours of our dutie, but we snatch at occasions of dispensation, and therefore possibly may mistake the justice of the opportunities by the importunities of our desires. However, if this too much easinesse be in any case excusable from sinne; yet in all cases it is an argument of infirmity, and the regular observation of the Commandment is the surer way to perfection. For not every inconvenience of body is fit to be pleaded against the inconvenience of loosing spirituall advantages, but onely such which upon prudent account does intrench upon the Lawes of Charity:

or

or such whose consequent is likely to be impediment of a duty in a greater degree of losse then the present omission. For the spirit being in many perfections more eminent then the body, all spirituall improvements have the same proportions; so that if we were just estimators of things, it ought not to be lesse then a great incommodity to the body, which we mean to prevent by the losse of a spirituall benefit, or the omission of a duty; he were very improvident, who would loose a finger for the good husbandry of saving a duckat; and it would be an unhandsome excuse from the duties of repentance to pretend care of the body. The proportions and degrees of this are so nice and of so difficult determination, that men are more apt to untie the girdle of discipline with the loose hands of dispensation and excuse, then to strain her too hard by the strictures and bindings of severity, but the error were the surer on this side.

3. The blessed J E S U S refused not the signature of this bloody Covenant, though it were the Character of a Sinner, and did Sacramentally rescind the impure reliques of Adam, and the contractions of evil customes, which was the greatest descent of humility that is imaginable, that he should put himself to pain to be reckoned amongst sinners and to have their Sacraments and their Protestations, though his innocence was purer then the flames of Cherubim. But we use arts to seem more righteous then we are, desiring rather to be accounted holy, then to be; as thinking the vanity of reputation more usefull to us, then the happinesse of a remote and far distant Eternity. But if (as it is said) Circumcision was ordained, besides the signing of the Covenant, to abolish the guilt of Originall sin, we are willing to confesse that, it being no act of humiliation to confesse a crime that all the world is equally guilty of, that could not be avoided by our time-liest industry, and that serves us for so many ends in the excuse and mineration of our actual impieties; so that as *Diogenes* trampled upon *Plato's* pride with a greater fastuoussesse, and humorous ostentation; so we do with *Originall sin*; declame against it bitterly to save the others harmless, and are free in the publication of this, that we may be instructed how to conceal the actual. The blessed J E S U S had in him no principle of sin, originall nor actual, and therefore this designation of his in submitting himself to the bloody Covenant of Circumcision, which was a just expresse and Sacramentall abscission of it, was an act of glorious humility; yet our charging of our selves so promptly with *Adams* fault, what ever truth it may have in the strictnesse of Theology, hath put an ill end in morality; and so I now consider it without any reflexion upon the precise Question.

4. For though the fall of *Adam* lost to him all those supernaturall assistances which God put into our nature by way of grace, yet it is by accident that we are more prone to many sins then we are to vertue, *Adams* sin did discompose his understanding and affections; and every sin we do, does still make us more unreasonable, more violent, more sensuall, more apt still to the multiplication of the same or the like actions; the first rebellion of the inferiour faculties against the will and understanding and every victory the flesh gets over the spirit makes the inferiour insolent, strong, tumultuous, domineering and triumphant, upon the proportionable ruins of the spirit, blinding our reason and binding our will; and all these violations of our powers are increased by the perpetuall ill customes and false principles and ridiculous guises of the World; which makes the latter ages to be worse then the

the * former, unleſſe ſome other accident do intervene to ſtop the ruine and declenſion of vertue, ſuch as are Gods judgements, the ſending of Prophets, new impoſition of laws, meſſages from heaven, diviner inſtitutions, ſuch as in particular was the great Diſcipline of Chriſtianity. And even in this ſence here is Origination enough for ſin and impairing of the reaſonable faculties of humane ſouls without charging our faults upon Adam.

But besides this; God who hath propounded to man glorious conditions, and design'd him to an excellent state of immortality, hath required of him such a duty as shall put man to labour, and present to GOD a service of a free and difficult obedience. For therefore GOD hath given us laws, which come crosse and are refrains to our naturall inclinations that we may part with something in the service of GOD, which we value. For although this is nothing in respect of GOD yet to man it is the greatest he can do. What thanks were it to man to obey GOD in such things which he would do though he were not commanded. But to leave all our own desires, and to take up objects of GODS propounding contrary to our own, and desires against our nature, this is that which GOD design'd as a sacrifice of our selves to him. And therefore GOD hath made many of his laws to be prohibitions in the matter of naturall pleasure, and refrains of our sensitive appetite. Now this being become the matter of Divine laws, that we should in many parts and degrees abstaine from what pleases our senses, by this supervening accident it happens that we are very hardly weaned from sinne, but most easily tempted to a vice. And then we think we have reason to lay the fault upon originall sinne and naturall averfation from goodnesse, when this inclination to vice is but accidentall, and occasionall upon the matter and function of the laws. *Our nature is not contrary to vertue, for the laws of nature, and right reason do not only oblige us, but * incline us to it; but the instances of some vertues are made to come crosse our nature, that is to our naturall appetites by reason of which it comes to passe, that (as S.^r Paul sayes) we are by nature the children of wrath,* meaning, that by our naturall inclinations we are disposed to contradict those laws which lay fetters upon them, we are apt to satisfie the lusts of the flesh, for in these be there instances.

But in things intellectuall and spirittuall, where neither the one nor the other satisfie the sensuall part, we are indifferent to vertue or to vice, and when we do amisse it is wholly and in all degrees inexcusably our own fault. In the old law when it was a duty to swear by the GOD of *Israel* in solemne causes, men were apt enough to swear by him onely, and that sometimes the *Israelites* did swear by the Queen of heaven; it was by the ill example and desires to comply with the neighbour nations, whose daughters they sometime married, or whose arms they feared, or whose friendship they desired, or with whom they did negotiate. It is indifferent to us to love our Fathers and to love strangers, according as we are determin'd by custome or education. Nay for so much of it as is naturall and originall, we are more inclin'd to love them, then to disrepute them, and if we disobey them it is when any injunction of theirs comes crosse to our naturall desires and purposes. But if from our infancie we be told concerning a stranger that he is our Father, we frame our affections to nature, and our nature to custome and education, and are as apt to love him who is not, and yet is said to be, as him, who is said not to be, and yet indeed is our naturall Father.

And

* Ταῦτα πάντα ἐξ
ἐγγὺς θινῶν γασ-
τρίων βιβλίσκων το-
υτοῦ φούου ἐκ τῆς
ἀρσενος ἐξάστους
βίον, ὡς χρυσὸν
γὰρ ἐκ τοῦ ζώου
Porphyr. l. 4. c. 6 non
est animalium.

\$.

[illegible]

6.

7.

And in sensuall things; if GOD had commanded Polygamy or promiscuous Concubinate, or unlimited eatings and drinkings, it is not to be supposed, but that we should have been ready enough to have obeyed GOD in all such impositions. And the sons of *Israel* never murmured, when GOD bade them borrow jewels and ear-rings, and spoil the Egyptians: But because GOD restrain'd these desires, our duties are the harder, because they are fetters to our liberty and contradictions to those naturall inclinations, which also are made more active by evil custome and unhandsome educations. From which premises we shall observe in order to practise, that sin creeps upon us in our education * so tacitely and undiscernably, that we mistake the cause of it, and yet so prevalently and effectually, that we judge it to be our very nature, and charge it upon *Adam*, to lessen the imputation upon us or to encrease the licence or the confidence, when every one of us is the *Adam*, the man of sin, and the parent of our own impurities. For it is notorious that our own iniquities do so discompose our naturalls, and evill customes and examples do so incourage impietie, and the law of GOD enjoyns such vertues which do violence to nature, that our proclivity to sin is occasion'd by the accident, and is caused by our selves, * whatever mischief *Adam* did to us, we do more to our selves. We are taught to be revengful in our cradles, and are taught to strike our Neighbor as a means to still our frowardnesse, and to satisfie our wranglings. Our nurses teach us to know the greatnesse of our birth, or the riches of our inheritance, or they learn us to be proud, or to be impatient, before they learn us to know GOD, or to say our Prayers; And then because the use of reason comes at no definite time, but insensibly and divisibly, we are permitted such acts with impunity too long, deferring to repute them to be sins, till the habite is grown strong, naturall and masculine, and because from the infancy it began in inclinations, and tender overtures and slighter actions; *Adam* is laid in the fault, and *originall sinne* did all; and this clearly we therefore confesse, * that our faults may seem the lesse, and the misery be pretended natural, that it may be thought to be irremediable; and therefore we not engaged to endeavour a cure, so that the confession of our originall sin, is no imitation of *CHRISTS* humility in suffering Circumcision; but too often an act of Pride, carelesnesse, ignorance and security.

* Non enim nos tardat natura dan navis, sed ultra nobis quod oportebat indulgimus: ita non tam ingenio nos illi superavit quam proposito. Quintil. orat. 1.

Συμμεμετα φησὶν ἡ φύσις τῶν τῶν φύσιν ἰσχυρὰ ἐκδηλοῦνται, ταύτην ἰσχυρὰ ἡ φύσις δαίμων.

Arist. 1. Top. c. 3. Ἡ φύσις ἰσχυρὰ, αἰσθητικὴ ἀνδραποδοῦ.

Stob. term. 250. —deniq; te ipsum concute, numq; tributiorum in-

severit olim natura, aut etiam consuetudo mala namque

neglectis urenda filix innalcitur agnis. Horat. satyr. 3.

Ante palatum eorum quam os in ignis. Gaudemus si quid licet tuis dixerint. Ve ba ne Alexandris quidem permittenda delictis. Iu & osculo excipimus. I. ut ex his consuetudo, deinde natura. Dikunt hac miseri, antequam sciunt vicia esse. Quintil. 1. 1. c. 2.

Tanta est corruptela mala consuetudinis ut ab ea tanquam igniculi extinguantur a natura deti exorianturq; & consumentur contraria vicia. Cicero.

* Εἰς οὗτον γὰρ ἐκλήθη τὸν ἀνδραποδὸν ὡς ὁ νόμος ἰσχυρὸς ἐν τῷ πνεύματι τοῦ ἱουδαίου τοῦ γένους, ὡς ἐκὶν ἐν τῷ δουλεύειν καὶ χαλᾶν, ἀνταρδύμενος μὴ ἐν ἑαυτῷ τῷ ἰουδαίῳ ὄντι. Isocrates

ep. Timoth.

8.

At the Circumcision his Parents impos'd the holy name told to the Virgin by the Angel, his name was called *JESUS*; a name above every name. For in old times GOD was known by names of power, of nature, of Majesty: But his name of mercy was reserved till now, when GOD did purpose to powre out the whole treasure of his mercy by the mediation and ministry of his holy Son. And because GOD gave to the Holy Babe the name, in which the treasures of mercy were deposited, and exalted *this name* above all names, we are taught that the purpose of his Counsel was, to exalt and mag-

-nine

THE PRAYER.

And as the revelation of this name satisfied the hopes of all the world, so it must determine our worshippings, and the addressees of our exterior and interior religion: it being that name whereby GOD and GODS mercies are made presentia to us and proportionate objects of our religion and affections.



The PRAYER.

Most holy and ever blessed JESU, who art infinite in essence, glorious in mercy, mysterious in thy communications, affable and presentia in the descents of thy humanity, I adore thy glorious name whereby thou hast shut up the abysses, and opened the gates of heaven, restraining the power of hell, and discovering and communicating the treasures of thy Fathers mercies. O JESU, be thou a JESUS unto me, and save me from the precipices and ruins of sin, from the expresses, of thy Fathers wrath, from the miseries and unsufferable torments of accursed spirits by the power of thy Majesty, by the sweetnesses of thy mercy, and sacred influences and miraculous glories of thy Name. I adore and worship thee in thy excellent obedience and humility, who hast submitted thy Innocent and spotlesse flesh to the bloody Covenant of Circumcision; teach me to practise so blessed and holy a precedent, that I may be humble and obedient to thy sacred laws, severe and regular in my religion, mortified in my body and spirit, of circumcised heart and tongue, that what thou didst represent in symboll and mystery, I may really expresse in the exhibition of an exemplar, pious, and mortified life, cutting off all excrescencies of my spirit, and whatsoever may minister to the flesh, or any of it's ungodly desires, that now thy holy name is called upon me, I may do no dishonour to the name, nor scandall to the institution, but may do thee honour and worship and adorations of a pure religion, O most holy and ever blessed JESU. Amen.

Disc-



Discourse. 2.

Of the Vertue of Obedience.

THere are certain excellencies either of habit or of consideration which spirituall persons use to to call *Generall wayes*, being a dispersed influence into all the parts of good life, either directing the single actions to the right end, or managing them with right instruments, and adding speciall excellencies and formalities to them, or morally inviting to the repetition of them; but they are like the generall medicaments in Physick, or the prime instruments in Mathematicall Disciplines, such as are the consideration of the Divine presence, the example of JESUS, right intention; and such also is the vertue of *obedience*, which perfectly unites our actions to GOD, and conforms us to the Divine will, which is the Originall of goodnesse, and sanctifies and makes a man an holocaust to GOD, which contains in it eminently all other graces, but especially those graces whose essence consists in a conformity of a part or the whole: (such are faith, humility, patience and charity) which gives quietnesse and tranquillity to the spirit, and is an Antepast of Paradise (where their Jubilee is the perpetuall joyes of Obedience, and their doing is the enjoying the Divine pleasure;) which adds an excellency and lustre to pious actions, and hallows them which are indifferent, and lifts up some actions from their unhallowed nature to circumstances of good and of acceptance. If a man sayes his prayers or communicates out of custome, or without intuition of the precept and Divine Commandment, the act is like a ship returning from her voyage without her venture and her burden, as unprofitable as without stowage. But if GOD commands us either to eat or to abstain: to sleep, or to be waking: to work, or to keep a sabbath: these actions which are naturally neither good nor evil, are sanctified by the obedience, and rank'd amongst actions of the greatest excellency. And this also was it which made *Abraham's* offer to kill his Son, and the *Israelites* spoiling the *Egyptians* to become acts laudable and not unjust: they were acts of obedience, and therefore had the same formality and essence with actions of the most spirituall devotions. GODS command is all our rule for practise, and our obedience united to the obedience of JESUS is all our title to acceptance.

But by obedience I do not here mean the exterior execution of the work, for so, obedience is no grace distinct from the acting any or all the Commandments: but besides the doing of the thing (for that also must be presupposed) it is a sacrifice of our proper will to GOD, a choosing the duty because GOD commands it. For beasts also carry burdens and
do

do our commands by compulsion: and the fear of slaves, and the rigour of task-masters made the number of bricks to be compleated when *Israel* groan'd and cried to GOD for help. But sons that labour under the sweet paternall regiment of their Fathers, and the influence of love, they love the precept and do the imposition, with the same purposes and complaiant affections with which the Fathers made it. When CHRIST commanded us to renounce the World, there were some that did think it was a hard saying, and do so still; and the young rich man forsook him upon it: but *Ananias* and *Saphira* upon whom some violences were done by custome, or the excellent sermons of the Apostles, sold their possessions too, but it was so against their will that they retain'd part of it: but *S. Paul* did not onely forsake all his secular fortunes, but counted all to be dross that he might gain CHRIST; he gave his will, made an offertory of that, as well as of his goods, choosing the act which was enjoyn'd, this was the obedience the holy JESUS paid to his heavenly Father, so voluntary that it was *meat to him to do his Fathers will.*

John 4. 34.

3.

*S. Hieron. epist ad
Liam. Hispan.*

Idem in 19.
Matth. 28.

And this was intended alwayes by GOD [*My son give me thy heart*] and particularly by the holy JESUS, for in the saddest instance of all his precepts, even that of suffering persecution, we are commanded to *rejoyce, and to be exceeding glad.* And so did those holy Martyrs in the primitive ages, who upon just grounds when GODS glory, or the edification of the Church had interest in it, they offered themselves to Tyrants, and dared the violence of the most cruell and howelless hangmen. And this is the best oblation we can present to GOD, *To offer Gold is a present fit to be made by young beginners in religion, not by men in Christianity, Yea, Crates the Theban threw his gold away, and so did Antisthenes; but to offer our will to GOD, to give our selves, is the act of an Apostle, the proper act of Christians.* And therefore when the Apostles made challenge of a reward, for leaving all their possessions, CHRIST makes no reply to the instance, Nor says, *you who have left all, But you, who have followed me in the regeneration, shall sit upon twelve thrones and judge the twelve tribes of Israel,* Meaning that the quitting the goods, was nothing; but the obedience to CHRIST; that they followed JESUS in the regeneration, going themselves in pursuit of him, and giving themselves to him, that was it which intitled them to a throne.

4.

And this therefore GOD enjoyns, that our offerings to him may be intire and complete, that we pay him a holocaust, that we do his work without murmuring, and that his burden may become easy, when it is borne up by the wings of love and alacrity of spirit. For in effect this obedience of the will is in true speaking and strict Theology nothing else, but that *charity* which gives excellency to alms, and energy to faith, and acceptance to all graces. But I shall reduce this to particular and more minute considerations.

5.

*Fideli obediens re-
sist moras, legit cras-
tinum, ignorat tacit-
tatem, precepit pa-
cipientem, tunc ocu-
los visus, aures audi-
tus linguae vocis, ma-
nus operis, liberi pe-
des: totum se collig-
git, & imperantis col-
ligit voluntatem,
S. Bernardus de
obediencia.*

1. We shall best know that our will is in the obedience by our *promise undertaking*, by our cheerful managing, by our first execution; for all degrees of delay are degrees of immorigerousness, and unwillingness. And since time is extrinsecall to the act, and alike to every part of it, nothing determines an action but the opportunity without; and the desires and willingness within. And therefore he who deliberates beyond his first opportunity, and exterior determination and appointment of the act, brings

things free and wecd but wants a lamb for the sacrifice; and unlesse he offer up his *Isaac*, his beloved will, he hath no ministry prepared for GODS acceptance. He that does not repent to day, puts it to the Question whether he will repent at all or no. He that defers restitution, when all the Circumstances are fitted, is not yet resolved upon the duty. And when he does it, if he does it against his will, he does but do honorary penance with a paper upon his hat, and a taper in his hand; it may satisfie the Law, but not satisfie his Conscience; it neither pleases himself, and lesse pleases GOD. A sacrifice without a heart was a sad and ominous preface in the superstition of the Roman Augurs, and so it is in the service of GOD; For what the exhibition of the work is to man, that the presentation of the will is to GOD. It is but a cold charity to a naked begger to say, *GOD help thee*, and do nothing; give him clothes and he feels your charity, but GOD, who is the searcher of the heart, his apprehension of actions relative to him are of the inward motions, and addresss of the will, and without this our exteriour services are like the paying a piece of money, in which we have defaced the image, it is not current.

2. But besides the *willingnesse* to do the acts of *expresse Command*, the *readinesse* to do the *intimations* and *tacite* significations of GODS pleasure is the best testimony in the World that our will is in the obedience. Thus did the holy JESUS undertake a nature of infirmity, and suffer a death of shame and sorrow, and became obedient from the Circumcision even unto the death of the Crosse; not staying for a Command, but because it was his Fathers pleasure Mankind should be redeemed. For before the suscepcion of it he was not a person subjecible to a command. It was enough that he understood the inclinations and designs of his Fathers mercies. And therefore GOD hath furnished us with instances of uncommanded piety to be a touchstone of our obedience. He that does but his endeavours about the expresse commands hath a bridle in his mouth, and is restrained by violence, but a willing spirit is like a greedy eye, devours all it sees, and hopes to make some proportionable returns and compensations of duty for his infirmity, by taking in the intimations of GODS pleasure. When GOD commands chastity, he that undertakes a holy coelibate, hath great obedience to the command of chastity. GOD bids us give alms of our increase; he obeyes this with great facility, that *sells all his goods and gives them to the poor*. And, provided our hastinesse to snatch at too much does not make us let go our duty, like the indiscreet loads of too forward persons, too big, or too inconvenient and uncombin'd, there is not in the world a greater probation of our prompt obedience then when we look further then the precise duty, swallowing that and more with our ready and hopefull purposes, nothing being so able to do miracles as *love*, and yet nothing being so certainly accepted as *love*, though it could do nothing in productions and exteriour ministries.

3. But GOD requires that our obedience should have another excellency to make it a becoming present to the Divine acceptance; our *understanding* must be sacrificed too, and become an ingredient of our obedience. We must also believe that whatsoever GOD commands, is most fitting to be commanded, is most excellent in it self, and the best for us to do. The first gives our affections and desires to GOD, and this also gives our reason; and is a perfection of obedience not commu-

E

nicable

Es barbaria crucis
servatis: nam: reg: a
Regnum: Tacit:
l. 4. etiam.

6.

7.

nicable to the duties we owe to Man. For GOD onely is LORD of this faculty, and being the fountain of all wisdom, therefore commands our *understanding*, because he alone can satisfie it. We are bound to obey humane laws, but not bound to think the laws we live under, are the most prudent constitutions in the world. But GODS commandments are not onely a *lantern to our feet*, and a *light unto our paths*, but a rule to our reason, and satisfaction to our *understandings*, as being the instruments of our addresse to GOD, and conveyances of his grace and manuductions to Eternity. And therefore S. *John Climacus* defines obedience to be an "*unexamined and unquestioned motion, a voluntary death and sepulture of the will, a life without curiosity, a laying aside our own discretion in the midst of the riches of the most excellent understandings.*"

And certainly there is not in the world a greater strength against temptations, then is depolized in an *obedient understanding*, because that onely can regularly produce the same affections, it admits of fewer degrees, and an infrequent alteration. But the actions proceeding from the appetite as it is determined by any other principle then a satisfied understanding, have their heightnings and their declensions, and their chances and mutations according to a thousand accidents. *Reason* is more lasting then *desire*, and with fewer means to be tempted; but affections and motions of appetite as they are procured by any thing, so may they expire by as great variety of causes. And therefore to serve GOD by way of *understanding* is surer, and it self, unlesse it be by the accidentall increase of degrees greater then to serve him upon the motion and principle of passions and desires; though this be fuller of comfort and pleasure then the other. When *Lot* lived amongst the impure *Sodomites*, where his righteous soul was in a continuall agony, he had few exterior incentives to a pious life, nothing to enkindle the sensible flame of burning desires toward piety; but in the midst of all the discouragements of the world, nothing was left him but the way and precedency of a truly informed reason and conscience. Just so is the way of those wise souls who live in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, where piety is out of countenance, where austerity is ridiculous, religion under persecution, no examples to lead us on, there the understanding is left to be the guide, and it does the work the surest, for this makes the duty of many to be certain, regular, and chosen, constant, integrall, and perpetuall; but this way is like the life of an unmarried or a retired person, *lesse of grief* in it, and *lesse of joy*. But the way of serving GOD with the affections, and with the pleasures and entertainments of desires is the way of the more passionate and imperfect, not in a mans power to choose or to procure; but comes by a thousand chances meeting with a soft nature, credulous or weak, easy, or ignorant, softened with fears or invited by forward desires.

Those that did live amidst the servours of the primitive charity, and were so armed by their fires, grew inflamed by contact and vicinity to such burning and shining lights. And they therefore grew to high degrees of piety, because then every man made judgement of his own actions by the proportions which he saw before him, and believed all descents from those greater examples to be so many degrees

gress from the rule; And he that lives in a Colledge of Devout persons will compare his own actions with the devotion and customes of that society, and not with the remissness of persons he hears of in story, but what he sees and lives with. But if we live in an age of indevotion, we think our selves well asloild if we be warmer then their Ice; every thing which is above our example being eminent and conspicuous, though it be but like the light of a gloworme, or the sparkling of a Diamond, yet if it be in the midst of darknesse, it is a goodly beauty. This I call the way of serving GOD by desires and affections; and this is altered by example, by publike manners, by externall works, by the assignement of offices, by designation of conventions for prayer, by periods, and revolutions of times of duty, by hours and solemnities, so that a man shall owe his piety to these chances, which although they are graces of GOD, and instruments of devotion, yet they are not always in our power; and therefore they are but accidentall ministeries of a good life, and the least constant or durable. But when the principle of our piety is a conformity of our understanding to GODS laws, when we are instructed what to do, and therefore do it, because we are satisfied it is most excellent to obey GOD, this will support our piety against objections, lead it on in despite of disadvantages; this chooseth GOD *with reason*, and is not determined from without; and as it is in some degree necessary for all times, so it is the greatest security against the change of laws, and Princes and religions, and ages, when all the incentives of affection and exteriour determinations of our piety shall cease, and perhaps all externall offices, and *the daily sacrifice*, and piety it self shall fall from the face of the land; then the obedience *founded in the understanding* is the onely lasting strength is left us to make retreat, and to secure our conditions. Thus from the composition of the *will* and affections with our exteriour acts of obedience to GOD, our obedience is made *willing, swift and cheerfull*: but from the composition of the *understanding* our obedience becomes *strong, sincere and persevering*, and this that which *S. Paul* calls *our reasonable service*.

4 To which if we adde that our obedience be *universall*, we have all the qualifications which make the duty to be pious, and prudent. The meaning is, that we obey GOD in all his sanctions though the matter be in common account smal and inconsiderable, and give no indulgence to our selves to recede from the rule in any matter whatsoever. For the veryest minute of obedience is worth our attention, as being by GOD esteemed the tryall of our obedience in a greater affair. *He that is unjust in a little, will be unjust in a greater*, said our blessed Saviour. And since to GOD all matter is alike, and no more accrues to him in a hecatomb, then in a piece of gumme, in an Ascetick severity, then in a secular life, GOD regards not the matter of a precept, but the obedience, which in all instances is the same; and he that will prevaricate when the matter is trifling, and by consequence, the temptations to it weak and impotent, and soon confuted, will think he may better be excused when the temptations are violent and importunate as it commonly happens in affairs of greater importance. He that will lie to save sixpence, will not stick at it, when a thousand pound is the purchase; and possibly there is more contempt and despite done to the Divine au-

thority, when we disobey it in such particulars, wherein the obedience is most easie, and the temptations lesse troublesome; I do not say there is more injustice, or more malice in a small disobedience then in a greater, but there is either more contempt, or more negligence and dissolution of Discipline, then in the other.

11

And it is no small temptation of the Devill soliciting of us not to be curious of scruples and graines, nor to disturb our peace for lighter disobediences; perswading us that something must be indulged to publike manners, something to the civilities of society, something to nature, and to the approaches of our passions, and the motions of our first desires; *but that we be not over-righteous.* And true it is, that sometimes such surreptions and smaller undecencies are therefore pardoned and lessened almost to a nullity, because they dwell in the confines of things lawfull and honest, and are not so notorious as to be separated from permissions, by any publike, certain and universall cognisance, and therefore may passe upon a good man sometimes without observation. But it is a temptation when we think of neglecting them by a predetermined incuriousness; upon pretence they are small. But this must be reduced to more regular Conclusions.

12

1. Although smaller disobediences, expressed in slight misbecoming actions when they come by surprise and sudden invasion, are through the mercies of God dashed in the very approach, their bills of accusation are thrown out, and they are not esteemed as competent instruments of seperation from Gods love; yet when a smaller sinne comes by designe, and is acted with knowledge and deliberation (for then it is properly an act of disobedience) *Malitia supplet defectum statis.* The malice of the agent heightens the smallnesse of the act, and makes up the iniquity. To drink liberally once, and something more freely then the strict rules of Christian sobriety and temperance permit, is pardon'd the easier, when without deliberation and by surprise the person was abused, who intended not to transgresse a minute, but by little and little was mistaken in his proportions: but if a man by designe shall estimate his draughts and his good fellowship, and shall resolve upon a little intemperance, thinking because it is not very much, it is therefore none at all; that man hath mistaken himself into a crime; and although a little wound upon the finger is very curable, yet the smallest prick upon the heart is mortall: So is a designe and purpose of the smallest disobedience in its formality, as malicious and destructive, as in its matter it was pardonable and excusable.

13

Quæ humane flagi-
latae quævis pecca-
tæ sunt, crebra suber-
punt, si collecta non-
gravantur, ita non
gravabunt et oppri-
ment, sicut enim
aliquod grande pec-
catum. S. Aug. lib. 10.
hom. 50. Idem lib. de
punit. peccata veni-
alia si multiplicentur
decorum nostrum ita
exterminant, ut a
cælestis spousi am-
plexibus nos sepa-
rent.

† *Thaisius* *mutu-*
† *Quia* *prospici-*
† *co.* *Esch.*
† *Prometh.*
† *Αχαΐων* *επι-*
† *την* *τιλ* *α* *α*
† *επι* *Επιρ.*

2. Although every lesser disobedience when it comes singly, destroyes not the love of God; (for although it may lessen the habit, yet it takes not away its naturall being, nor interrupts its acceptation, lest all the world should in all instances of time be in a damnable condition) yet when these smaller obliquities are repeated, and no repentance intervenes, this repetition combines and unites the lesser till they be concentred and by their accumulation make a crime; and therefore a carelesse reiterating, and an incurious walking in misbecoming actions is deadly and damnable in the returne, though it was not so much at the setting forth. Every idle word is to be accounted for, but we hope in much mercy; and yet he, that gives himself over to immoderate * talking, will swell his account

account to a vast and mountainous proportion, and call all the lesser escapes into a stricter judgement. He that extends his Recreation an hour beyond the limits of Christian prudence, and the analogy of its severity and employment, is accountable to GOD for that improvidence and waste of Time; but he that shall mispend a day, and because that sin is not scandalous like a lutey, or clamorous like oppression, or unusuall like bestiality, or crying for revenge like detaining the portion of Orphans, shall therefore mispend another day without revocation of the first by an act of repentance and redemption of it, and then shall throw away a week, still adding to the former account upon the first stock, will at last be answerable for a habit of idleness, and will have contracted a vain and impertinent spirit. For since things, which in their own kinde are lawfull, become sinfull by the degree, if the degree be heightened by intention; or become great, like a heap of sand by a coaccervation of the innumerable atomes of dust, the actions are as damnable, as any of the naturall daughters and productions of hell: when they are entertained without scruple, and renewed without repentance, and continued without dereliction.

3. Although some inadvertencies of our life, and lesser disobediences, accidentally become lesse hurtfull, and because they are entaild upon the infirmities of a good man, and the lesse wary Customes and Circumstances of society, are also consistent with the state of grace, yet all affection to the smallest sins becomes deadly and damnable; *he that loves his danger shall perish in it*, saith the Wiseman; and every friendly entertainment of an undecency invites in a greater Crime: for no man can love a small sin, but there is in the greater crimes of its kinde more desirible flatteries, and more satisfactions of sensuality then in those suckers and sprigs of sin. At first, a little disobedience is proportionable to a Mans temper, and his Conscience is not fitted to the bulk of a rude Crime; but when a Man hath accepted the first insinuations of delight, and swallowed it; that little sin is past, and needs no more to dispute for entrance; then the next designe puts in and stands in the same probability to succeed the first, and greater then the first had to make the entry. However to love any thing that GOD hates is direct enmity with him; and whatsoever the Instance be it is absolutely inconsistent with charity, and therefore incompetent with the state of grace. So that if the sin be small it is not a small thing that thou hast given thy love to it; every such person perishes like a Fuel, cheaply and ingloriously.

4. But it also concerns the niceness and prudence of Obedience to GOD to stand at further distance from a Vice that we usually attend to. For many times Vertue and Vice differ but one degree, and the neighbourhood is so dangerous that he who desires to secure his Obedience, and Duty to GOD, will remove farther from the danger. For there is a rule of Justice, to which if one degree more of severity be added it degenerates into cruelty, and a little more mercy is remissness and want of Discipline, introduces licentiousness and becomes unmercifullness as to the publike, and unjust as to the particular. Now this Consideration is heightened if we observe that Vertue and Vice consist not in an indivisible point, but there is a latitude for either which is not to be judged by any certain rules drawn from the nature of the thing, but to be estimated in proportion to the persons

14.

*Natum peccatum est
et non veniale quod non
sit criminale dum
placet. dist. 25. folio.
Nunc autem, ex
S. August.*

15.

*Cum sit aq. nescit
exiguus sine libidinis
discrepant avari.
Hoyat.*

and other accidentall Circumstances. He that is burdened with a great charge, for whom he is bound under a Curse and the crime of Infidelity, to provide, may go further in the acquisition, and be more provident in the use of his money, then those persons for whom GOD hath made more ample provisions, and hath charged them with fewer burdens and engagements economicall. And yet no Man can say, that just beyond such a degree of Care stands Covetousnesse, and thus far on this side is Carelesnesse, and a man may be in the confines of Death before he be aware. Now the onely way to secure our obedience and duty in such Cases is to remove further off, and not to dwell upon the confines of the enemies Country. My meaning is, that it is not prudent, nor safe for a man to do whatsoever he lawfully may do.

16. For besides that we are often mistaken in our judgements concerning the lawfulness or unlawfulness of actions, he that will do all that he thinks he may lawfully do, if ever he does change his station and increase in giving himself liberty, will quickly arrive at doing things unlawful. It is good to keep a reserve of our liberty and to restrain ourselves within bounds narrower then the largest sense of the Commandment, that when our affections wander and enlarge themselves (as sometime or other they will do) then they may enlarge beyond the ordinary and yet be within the bounds of lawfulness. That of which men make a scruple and a question at first, after an habituall resolution of it stirs no more; but then their question is of something beyond it. When a man hath accustomed himself to pray seven times a day, it will a little trouble his peace if he omits one or two of those times; but if he be resolved then, that he may please GOD with praying devoutly though but thrice every day; after he hath digested the scruples of this first question, possibly some accidents may happen that will put his Conscience and reason to dispute whether three times be indispensably necessary, and still if he be far within the bounds of lawfulness, 'tis well, but if he be at the margin of it, his next remove may be into dissolution and unlawfulness. He that resolves to gain all that he may lawfully this yeer, it is odds but the next yeer he will be tempted to gain something unlawfully. He that because a man may be innocently angry will never restrain his passion, in a little time will be intemperate in his anger, and mistake both his object and the degree. Thus facetiousnesse and urbanity entertained with an open hand will turn into jestings that are uncomely.

17. If you will be secure, remove your tent, dwell further off; GOD hath given us more liberty then we may safely use; and although GOD is so gracious as to comply much with our infirmities, yet if we do so too, as GODS goodness in indulging liberty to us was to prevent our sinning; our complying with our selves will engage us in it: But if we imprison and confine our affections into a narrower compass, then, our extravagancies may be imperfect, but will not easily be criminal. The dissolution of a scrupulous and strict person is not into a vice, but into a lesse degree of vertue; he that makes a conscience of loud laughter, will not easily be drawn into the wantonnesse of Balls and revellings, and the longer and more impure Carnivals. This is the way to secure our obedience; and no men are so curious

curious of their health, as they that are scrupulous of the ayre they breathe in.

But now for our obedience to man, that hath distinct considerations, and apart.

1. All obedience to man is for Gods sake; for God imprinting his authority upon the sonnes of men, like the Sunne reflecting upon a cloud produces a Parelius, or a representation of his owne glory, though in great distances and imperfection; it is the *Divine authority*, though character'd upon a piece of clay, and imprinted upon a weak and imperfect man: And therefore obedience to our superiours must be *universall* in respect of persons to all superiours. This precept is expressly Apostolicall, *Be subject to every constitution and authority of man for the Lords sake*: It is for Gods sake, and therefore to every one, *Whether it be to the King, as supreme, or to his Ministers in subordination*: That's for civill government; for Ecclesiasticall this; *Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit your selves; for they watch for your soules, as they that must give account*, All, upon whom any ray of the divine Authority is imprinted, whether it be in greater or smaller Characters, are in proportion to their authority to be obeyed, to all upon the same ground; *for there is no power but of * God*. So that no infirmity of person, no undervaluing circumstance, no exteriour accident is an excuse for disobediences and to obey the divine authority passing through the dictates of a wise, excellent and prudent Governour; but to neglect the impositions of a looser head, is to worship Christ onely upon the Mount Tabor, and in the glories of his Transfiguration, and to despise him upon Mount Calvary, and in the clouds of his inglorious and humble Passion: *Not onely to the good and gentle, so S. Peter, but to the harsh and rigid*. And it was by divine providence that all those many and stricter precepts of obedience to Governours in the New Testament were verified by instances of Tyrants, Persecutors, Idolators, and Heathen Princes: and for others amongst whom there was variety of disposition, there is no variety of imposition, but all excuses are removed, and all kindes of Governours drawn into the function and sacrednesse of Authority.

2. *Not onely to all Governours, but in all things we must obey. Children obey your Parents in all things: And, servants obey your Masters in all things.* And this also is upon the same ground, *Do it as unto Christ; as unto the Lord, and not unto men*. But then this restraines the universallitie of obedience, that it may run within its owne channell; *as unto the Lord*; therefore nothing against the Divine Commandment. For if GOD speakes to us by man, transmitting Lawes for conservation of civill societie, for ecclesiasticall policie, for Justice and personall advantages, for the interests of Vertue and Religion, for discountenancing of vice, we are to receive it with the same veneration as if God spake himself to us immediately; but because by his terrour upon Mount Sinai he gave testimony how great favour it is to speak to us by the ministration of our brethren, it were a strange impudence when we desire a proportionable and gentle instrument of divine commands, we should for this very proportion despise the Minister; like the Frogs in the Apologue insulting upon their wooden king: but then if any thing come contrary to a divine Law, know it is the voyce of Jacob, of the supplanter,

18.

inaculatus est
nos in domo m
ti casu
casu
de d'ulic wallen
iniquitatis, et tol
nos in m' te
gale in ti casu
lucis in domo
iniquitatis in d'ic
lucis in domo
lucis in domo
Eustath. ad
Iliad. 1.

1 Pet. 2.13.

Heb. 13.7.

Rom. 13.1.

* Regum timenda-
rum in proprio
reges Reges in ho-
ris imperium est
Jovis cuncta super-
cilio movetur.
Hor. l. p. Od. 1.
libi super.

19.

Coloss. 3.20,22

Ephes. 6.5.

not of the right heir; and though we must obey Man for GOD'S sake, yet we must never disobey GOD for Mans sake. In all things else we finde no exception; but according as the superiours intend the obligation and expresse it by the signature of laws, customs, interpretations, permissions, and dispensations, that is, so far as the law is obligatory in generall, and not dispensed with, in particular, so far obedience is a duty, in all instances of acts where no sin is ingredient.

20.

3. And here also the smallness and cheapness of the duty does not tolerate disobedience; for the despising the smallest injunction is an act of as small and direct rebellion as when the pervarication is in a higher instance. It is here as in divine laws, but yet with some difference: For small things do so little cooperate to the end of humane laws, that a smaller reason does by way of interpretation and tacite permission dispense; then can in a Divine sanction though of the lowest offices. Because GOD commands duties not for the end to which they of themselves do cooperate: but to make sacred his authority, and that we by our obedience may confesse him to be LORD: But in humane laws the authority is made sacred, not primarily for its self, but principally that the laws made in order to the conservation of societies may be observed. So that in the neglect of the smallest of Divine ordinances we as. Directly oppose GODS great purpose and intendment, as in greater matters: GODS dominion and authority (the conservation of which was his principall intention) is alike neglected: But in omitting an humane imposition of small concernment the case is different; it is certain there is not any considerable violence done to the publike interest by a contemptible omission of a Law: the thing is not small, if the Common-wealth be not safe, and all her great ends secured; but if they be, then the authority is inviolate, unless a direct contempt were intended, for its being was in order to that end, not for it self, as it is in the case of divine laws, but that the publike interest be safe.

De minimis non curat lex.

21.

And therefore as great matters of humane Laws may be omitted for great reasons, so may smaller matters for smaller reasons, but never without reason: for, *causelessly and contemptuously are all one.* But in the application of the particulars, either the laws themselves, or custome or the prudence of a sincere, righteous man, or of a wise and disinterest person is to be the Judge. But let no mans confidence increase from the smallness of the matter to a contempt of the authority; for there are some sins whose malignity is accidentally increased by the slightness of the subject matter, such are blasphemy, perjury, and the contempt of authority. To blaspheme GOD for the losse of an Asper or a penny, to be forsworne in judgement for the rescuing of a few Maravids, or a five groats fine, is a worse crime then to be perjur'd for the saving ten thousand pounds; and to despise authority, when the obedience is so easy as the wearing of a garment, or doing of a posture, is a greater and more impudent contempt, then to despise authority imposing a great burthen of a more considerable pressure, where humane infirmity may tempt to a disobedience, and lessen the crime. And let this caution also be inserted, that we do not at all neglect small impositions, if there be direct and signal injunction in the particular instance. For as a great Body of Light transmitting his rayes through a narrow hollownesse does

does by that small Pyramid represent all the parts of its magnitude and glory: So it may happen that a publick interest, and the concerns of authority, and the peace of a Church, and the integrall obedience of the Subjects, and the conservation of a Community, may be transferred to us by an instance in its own nature inconsiderable; such as are wearing of a Cognizance, remembering of a Word, carrying a Branch in time of war, and things of the same nature; and therefore when the hand of authority is stretched out, and held forth upon a precept, and designs the duty upon particular reason, or with actual intuition; there is not the same facility of being dispensed with, as in the neglected and unconsidered instances of other duties. This onely I desire to be observed; that if death or any violent accident, imprisonment, losse of livelyhood, or intolerable inconveniencies be made accidentally consequent to the observing of a law meerly humane, the law binds not in the particular instance. No Man is bound to be a Martyr for a *ceremony*, or to dye rather then break a *Canon*, or to suffer confiscation of goods for the pertinacious keeping of a civil constitution. And it is not to be supposed that a Lawgiver Civil or Ecclesiastical would have decreed a rite, and bound the lives of the subjects to it, which are of a far greater value then a rite. For the Subject could not have accepted that Law, nor the Superiour decree it, not onely because it were tyrannical and unreasonable, but because the evil of the Law were greater then the good of it, it were against the reason of all Laws, and destroyes the privileges of Nature, and it puts a Man into a condition as bad as the want of all Lawes, for nothing is civilly or naturally worse then Death, to which the other evils arrive in their proportion. This is to be understood in particular and positive precepts, introduced for reasons particular, that is, lesse then those are which combine all societies, and which are the cement of all bodies politicall: I mean Lawes ritual in the Church, and accidental and emergent in the State. And that, which is the best signe to distinguish these Laws from others, is also the reason of the assertion. Laws decreed with a penalty to the transgressours cannot binde to an *evil greater* then that *penalty*. If it be appointed that we use a certain form of Liturgy under the forfeiture of five pound for every omission, I am bound in conscience to obey it, where I can; but I am supposed legally to be disabled, if any Tyrant-power shall threaten to kill me if I do, or make me pay an hundred pound, or any thing greater then the forfeiture of the Law. For all the civil and naturall power of the Law is by its coercion, and the appendant punishment. The Law operates by rewards and punishments, by hope and fear, and it is unimaginable that the Law under a lesse penalty can oblige us in any case or accident to suffer a greater. For the compulsion of the Tyrant is greater then the coercion of the Lawgiver; and the Prince thinking the penalty annexed to be band sufficient, intended no greater evil to the *transgressour*, then the expressed penalty; and therefore much lesse would he have them *that obey the law* by any necessity be forced to a greater evil: For then, Disobedience should escape better then Obedience. True it is, every disobeying person, that payes the penalty, is not quite discharged from all his Obligation; but it is then, when his disobeying is criminall upon some other stock besides the meer breach of the Law; as Contempt, Scandal,

* Lucius Veratius pro
delectamento habuit
eo hominis liberi pal-
ma verberare. Eum
servus sequebatur
cromenam plenam
odium grates, &
quomodo, sic per-
cussit, iussit statim
a ierant 25 ailes qui
pro multa hinc ot-
tensa ex lege 12 tab.
imponbantur, &
Gildas: stat.

Heb. 10. 25.

Wide ps. 2. Disc. 9.
74. 12.

scandal, or the like; for the Law binds the Conscience indirectly and by consequence; that is, in plain language, GOD commands us to obey hu-
mane Laws, and the penalty will not pay for the contempt, because that's
a sin against GOD; it payes for the violation of the Law, * because that
was all the direct transgression against Man. And then who shall make him
recompence for suffering more then the Law requires of him? *Not the
Prince*; for it is certain the greatest value he set upon the Law, was no big-
ger then the penalty; and the Common-wealth is supposed to be sufficient-
ly secured in her interest by the penalty, or else the Law was weak, impo-
tent, and unreasonable. *Not GOD*, for it is not an act of obedience to him;
for he binds us no further to obey humane Laws, then the Lawgiver him-
self intends or declares; who cannot reasonably be supposed so over care-
ful, as to binde Hay with cords of silk and gold, or sumptuary Laws with
the threads of life; nor a Father commanding his child to wait on him
every meal, be thought to intend his Obligation, even though the house
be ready to fall on his head, or when he is to passe a sudden or unfoordable
flood, before he can get to him; and that it may appear, Man ought not,
it is certain, GOD himself does not oblige us in all cases, and in all cir-
cumstances to observe every of his positive precepts. For, *assembling toge-
ther* is a duty of GODS comanding; which we are *not to neglect*: but if
Death waits at the door of these assemblies, we have the practice of the
Primitive and best Christians to warrant us, to serve GOD in Retirements;
and Cells, and Wilderneses, and leave the *assembling together* till better
opportunities. If I receive more benefit, or the Common-wealth, or the
Church or Religion any greater advantage by my particular obedience in
these circumstances, (which cannot easily be supposed will be) it is a great
act of charity to do it, and then to suffer for it. But if it be no more, that
is, if it be not *expressly commanded* to be done (though with losse of life or con-
fiscation) it is a good charity to save my own life, or my own estate: And
though the other may be better, yet I am not in all cases obliged to do
that which is simply the best. It is a tolerable infirmity, and allowed amongst
the very first permissions of Nature, that I may preserve my life, unless it
be in a very few cases, which are therefore clearly to be expressed, or else
the contrary is to be presumed, as being a case most favourable. And it is
considerable, that nothing is worse then Death, but Damnation, or some-
thing that partakes of that in some of its worst ingredients; such as is, a
lasting torment, or a daily great misery in some other kinde. And there-
fore since no humane Law can binde a Man to a worse thing then Death, if
obedience brings me to death, I cannot be worse when I disobey it, and I
am not so bad, if the penalty of death be not expressed. And so for other
penalties in their own proportions. This Discourse is also to be under-
stood concerning the *Laws of peace*, not of war; not onely because every
disobedience in war may be punished with death (according as the reason
may chance) but also because little things may be of great and dangerous
consequence. But in peace it is observable, that there is no humane pos-
itive superinduced Law, but by the practice of all the world (which, be-
cause the permission of the Prince is certainly included in it, is the surest
interpretation) it is dispensed withall, by ordinary necessities, by reason
of lesser inconveniencies, and common accidents: such as the not saying of
our office daily is excused by the study of Divinity; the publishing the
banes

banes of Matrimony by an ordinary incommmodity; the Fasting-dayes of the Church by a little sicknesse or a journey, and therefore much rather, if my estate, and most of all if my life be in danger with it: and to say that in these cases there is no interpretative permission to omit the particular action, is to accuse the Laws and the Lawgiver, the one of unreasonableness, the other of uncharitableness.

4. These Considerations are upon the execution of the duty: but even towards Man our obedience must have a mixture of the will and choice, like as our injunction of obedience to the Divine Command. *With good will doing service* (saith the Apostle) for it is impossible to secure the duty of inferiours but by conscience and good will; unlesse provision could be made against all their secret arts and concealments and escapings, which as no providence can foresee, so no diligence can cure. It is but *an eye service* whatsoever is compelled and involuntary; nothing rules a Man in private but GOD and his own desires, and that gives Laws in a Wilderness, and accuses in a Cloister, and does execution in a Cloister, if there be any prevarication.

5. But obedience to humane Laws goes no further, we are not bound to obey with a direct and particular act of understanding, as in all divine sanctions: for so long as our Superiours are fallible, though it be highly necessary we conform our wills to their innocent laws, yet it is not a duty we should think the Laws most prudent or convenient; because all Laws are not so; but it may concern the interest of humility and self-denial to be subject to an inconvenient, so it be not a sinful Command: for so we must choose an affliction when GOD offers it, and give GOD thanks for it, and yet we may cry under the smart of it, and call to GOD for ease and remedy: And yet it were well, if inferiours would not be too busie in disputing the prudence of their Governours and the convenience of their Constitutions; Whether they be sins or no in the execution and to our particulars we are concern'd to look to: I say, as to our particulars; for an action may be a sin in the Prince commanding it, and yet innocent in the person executing: as in the case of unjust wars, in which the subject who cannot, ought not to be a Judge, yet must be a Minister; and it is notorious in the case of executing an unjust sentence, in which * not the Executioner, but the Judge is onely the unjust person; and he that serves his Prince in an unjust war, is but the executioner of an unjust sentence; but what ever goes further, does but undervalue the person, slight the government, and unloose the golden cords of Discipline. For we are not intrusted in providing for degrees, so we secure the kinde and condition of our actions. And since GOD having derived rayes and beams of Majesty, and transmitted it in parts upon several states of Men, hath fixed humane authority and dominion in the golden candlestick of Understanding, he that shall question the prudence of his governour, or the wisdom of his sanction, does unclaspe the golden rings that tie the purple upon the Princes shoulder; he tempts himself with a reason to disobey, and extinguishes the light of Majesty by overturning the candlestick, and hiding the opinion of his wisdom and understanding. And let me say this; he that is confident of his owne understanding and reasonable powers (and who is more then he that thinks himself wiser then the Lawes) needs no other Devill in the neighbourhood, no tempter but himself, to pride, and vanity, which are the natural parents of disobedience.

But

22.

23.

* In damnum dei quod
jacet dare: sibi ve-
ro nulla culpa est cul-
pare necesse sit.
Vipian. l. 130.

Mi isis pñion
xñi dñy
ñññ Laert.

24.

Modum a. tenere in
 eo difficile est quod
 bonum esse credide-
 ris. Sen. ep. 23.

Collat. 12. c. 19.

Apud Evagrium.
 De eodem Stylite
 consulari testor,
 Epiph. l. 3. c. 18.
 Theod. & y. synod.
 Genet. & Baron. ad
 A. D. 435.

25.

Epiph. consulari 4.
 Abbat. Dion. c. 20.
 & s. Basil exhibuit ad
 vitam Monast. S.
 Greg. l. 15. Moral.
 c. 14. s. Bern. de ord.
 vitæ & morum instit.
 s. 1.

But a mans disobedience never seemes so reasonable as when the subject is forbidden to do an act of piety, commanded indeed in the generall, but uncommanded in certain circumstances. A forward piety and assiduous devotion, a great and undiscreet mortifier, is often ten piced to think no authority can restrain the fervours and dissemperers of zeale in such holy exercises; and yet it is very often as necessary to restrain the indiscretions of a forward person as to excite the remissnesse of the cold and frozen. Such persons were the *Sarabaites* spoken of by *Cassian*, who were greater labourers and stricter mortifiers then the religious in families and Colledges; and yet they endured no Superiour, nor Lawes. But such customes as these are humiliation without humility, humbling the body, and exalting the spirit, or indeed *sacrifices* and *no obedience*. It was an argument of the great wisdom of the Fathers of the Desert: when they heard of the prodigious severities exercised by *Simeon Stylites* upon himself, they sent one of the religious to him with power to enquire what was his manner of living, and what warrant he had for such a rigorous undertaking, giving in charge to command him to give it over, and to live in a community with them, and according to the common institution of those religious families. The Messenger did so, and immediately *Simeon* removed his foot from his pillar; with a purpose to descend: but the other according to his Commission call'd to him to stay, telling him his station and severity was from God. And he that in so great a piety was humble and obedient, did not undertake that strictnesse out of singularity, nor did it transport him to vanity; for that he had received from the Fathers to make judgement of the man, and of his institution; whereas if upon pretence of the great holinesse of that course he had refused the command, the spirit of the person was to be declared captive and imprudent, and the man driven from his troublesome and ostentous vanity.

Our Fasts, our Prayers, our Watchings, our Intensions of duty, our frequent communions, and all exterior acts of religion are to be guided by our Superiour, if he sees cause to restrain or assuage any excessencie. For a wound may heale too fast, and then the tumour of the flesh is proud, not healthfull; and so may the indiscretions of Religion swell to vanity when we think they grow towards perfection; but when we can indure the causticks and correctives of our spirituall guides, in those things in which we are most apt to please our selves, then our obedience is regular and humble; and in other things there is lesse of danger. There is a story told of a very religious person, whose spirit in the extase of devotion was transported to the clarity of a vision, and he seemed to converse personally with the holy JESUS, feeling from such intercourse great spirituall delights and huge satisfactions: in the midst of these joyes the bell call'd to prayers, and he, used to the strictnesse, and well instructed in the necessities of obedience, went to the Church, and having finished his devotions, returned and found the vision in the same posture of glories and entertainment; which also said to him, *Because thou hast left me, thou hast found me, for if thou hadst not left me, I had presently left thee*. Whatever the story be, I am sure it is a good Parable; for the way to increase spirituall comforts, is to be strict in the offices of humble obedience; and we never loose any thing of our joy by laying it aside to attend a duty; and *Plutarch* reports more honour of *Agefilans* prudence and modesty, then of his gallantry and military

military fortunes;* for he was more honorable by obeying the decree of the Spartan Senate, recalling him from the midst of his triumphs, then he could have been by finishing the war with prosperous success and disobedience.

* Titus Manlius fecit percussit filium, postquam hostem gloriose vicerat in merdita pugna. &c. Gell. lib. 13.

26.

Our obedience, being guided by these rules, is urged to us by the confirmation of divine precepts and the loud voice of thunder, even seal'd by a signet of GODS right hand, the signature of greatest judgements. For GOD did with greater severity punish the Rebellion of *Korah* and his company, then the expresse murmurs against himself, nay, then the high crime of Idolatry: for this crime GOD visited them with a sword; but for disobedience and mutiny against their Superiours, GOD made the earth to swallow some of them, and fire from Heaven to consume the rest; to shew that Rebellion is to be punished by the conspiracy of Heaven and Earth, as it is hateful and contradictory both to GOD and Man: And it is not amiss to observe, that obedience to Man being it is *for Gods sake*, and yet to a person clothed with the circumstances and the same infirmities with our selves is a greater instance of humility, then to obey GOD immediately whose authority is divine, whose presence is terrible, whose power is infinite, and not at all depressed by exterior disadvantages or lessening appearances; just as it is both greater faith and greater charity to relieve a poor Saint for JESUS sake, then to give any thing to CHRIST himself, if he should appear in all the robes of glory and immediate address. For it is to GOD, and to CHRIST, and wholly for their sakes, and to them that the obedience is done, or the charity expressed, but themselves are persons whose awfulness, Majesty, and veneration, would rather force then invite obedience or almes. But when GOD and his holy Son stands behinde the cloud and sends their servants to take the homage, or the charity, it is the same as if it were done to them, but it receives the advantage of acceptation by the accidental adherencies of Faith & Humility to the several actions respectively. When a King comes to Rebels in person, it strikes terror and veneration into them, who are too apt to neglect and despise the person of his Ministers, whom they look upon as their fellow subjects, and consider not in the exaltation of a deputed Majesty. *Charles* the fifth found a happy experience of it at *Gaunt* in Flanders, whose Rebellion he appeased by his presence, which he could hardly have done by his army. But if the Kings authority be as much rever'd in his Deputy, as it is sacred in his own person, it is the greater Humility and more confident Obedience. And as it is certain that he is the most humble that submits to his inferiours, so in the same proportion, the lower and meauer the instrument upon which GODS authority is born, the higher is the grace that teaches us to stoop so low. I do not say that a sin against humane laws is greater then a prevarication against a Divine Commandment; as the instances may be, the distance is next to infinite and to touch the earth with our foot within the *Ostraves* of Easter, or to taste flesh upon dayes of abstinence (even in those places and to those persons where they did or do oblige) have no consideration, if they be laid in balance against the crimes of Adultery, or Blasphemy, or Oppression. Because these crimes cannot stand with the reputation and sacredness of Divine Authority; but those others may in most instances very well consist with the ends of government, which are severally provided for in the diversity of functions respectively. But if we make our instances to other purposes, we finde, that to mutiny in an Army, or to keep private

Assemblies

Assemblies in a Monarchy, are worse then a single thought or morose delectation in a fancy of impurity; because those others destroy government more then these destroy charity of GOD or Obedience. But then though the instances may vary the Conclusion, yet the formal reason is alike, and disobedience to Man is a disobedience against GOD; for GODS authority, and not Mans, is imprinted upon the Superiour; and it is like sacred fire in an earthen censer, as holy as if it were kindled with the fanning of a Cherubs wing, or placed just under the propitiatory upon a golden Altar; and it is but a grosse conceit which cannot distinguish Religion from its Porter, *Isis* from the beast that carried it: so that in all disobedience to Men, in proportion to the greatnesse of the matter, or the malice of the person, or his contradiction to the ends of government and combinations of society, we may use the words by which the Prophet upbraided Israel, *Is it not enough that you are grievous unto men, but will you grieve my God also?* It is a contempt of the Divinity, and the affront is transmitted to GOD himself, when we despise the power which GOD hath ordained, and all power of every lawful Superiour is such; the Spirit of GOD being witness in the highest measure, *Rebellion is as the sin of Witchcraft, and stubbornnesse as Idolatry.* It is spoken of rebellion against GOD, and all Rebellion is so, for, *He that despiseth you, despiseth me,* saith the blessed JESUS, that's menace enough in the instance of spiritual regiment. And you are gathered together against the Lord, saith *Moses* to the rebellious Princes in the conspiracy of *Dathan*, that's for the temporal. * And to encourage this duty, I shall use no other words then those of *Homer* to *Achilles*, *They that obey in this world, are better then they that command in Hell.*

Isay 7. 13.

1 Sam. 15. 23.

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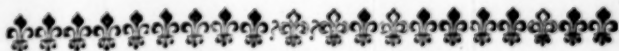
A Prayer for the grace of Holy O B E D I E N C E.

O Lord and blessed Saviour JESUS, by whose obedience many became righteous, and reparations were made of the ruines brought to Humane Nature, by the disobedience of Adam; thou comest into the world with many great and holy purposes concerning our salvation, and hast given us a great precedent of obedience; which that thou mightest preserve to thy Heavenly Father, thou didst neglect thy life, and becamest obedient even to the death of the Crosse; Oh, let me imitate so blessed example, and by the merits of thy obedience, let me obtain the grace of humility and abnegation of all my own desires in the clearest renunciation of my will; that I may will and refuse in conformity to thy sacred laws and holy purposes, that I may do all thy will cheerfully, choosingly, humbly, confidently, and continually; and thy will may be done upon me with much mercy and fatherly dispensation of thy Providence. Amen.

2.

LORD let my understanding adhere to, and be satisfied in the excellent wisdom of thy Commandments; let my affections dwell in their desires, and all my other faculties be set on daily work for performance of them; and let my love

to obey thee make me dutiful to my Superiors, upon whom the impresses of thy authority are set by thine own hand; that I may never despise their persons nor refuse their injunctions, nor choose mine own work, nor murmur at their burdens, nor dispute the prudence of the Sanction, nor excuse my self, nor pretend difficulties or impossibilities; but that I may be indifferent in my desires, and resigned to the will of those whom thou hast set over me; that since all thy Creatures obey thy word, I alone may not disorder the creation, and cancel those bonds and inter-medial links of subordination whereby my duty should passe to thee and thy glory; but that my obedience being united to thy obedience, I may also have my portion in the glories of thy Kingdom, O Lord and blessed Saviour JESUS. Amen.



Ad. Sect. 5.

Considerations upon the presentation of JESUS in the Temple.



THE holy Virgin Mother according to the Law of *Moses* at the expiration of a certain time came to the Temple to be purified, although in her sacred parturition she had contracted no legal impurity; yet she exposed her self to the publick opinion and common reputation of an ordinary condition; and still amongst all generations she is in all circumstances accounted blessed, and her reputation no tittle altered, save onely that it is made the more sacred by this testimony of her humility. But this we are taught from the consequence of this instance; that if an end principally design'd in any duty should be supplyed otherwise in any particular person, the duty is nevertheless to be observed; and then the obedience and publick order is reason enough for the observation, though the proper end of its designation be wanting in the single person. Thus is fasting design'd for mortification of the flesh, and killing all its unruly appetites, and yet married persons who have another remedy, and a Virgin whose Temple is hallowed by a gift, and the strict observances of chastity, are tyed to the duty; and if she were not, then fasting were nothing else but a publication of our impure desires, and an exposing the person to the confidence of a bold temptation, whilst the young men did observe the faster to be tempted from within. But the holy Virgin from these acts (of which in signification she had no need, because she sinned not in the Conception, nor was impure in the production) expressed other vertues besides obedience; such as were humble thoughts of her self, Devotion and Reverence to publick sanctions, Religion and Charity which were like the pure leaves of the whitest Lilly, fit to represent the

I.

Vide Rodriguez in explicat. Rulæ cruciatu. & Sir Thomas More against Tindal.

the beauties of her innocence, but were vail'd and shadowed by that sacramental of the Mosaick Law.

2. The holy Virgin received the greatest favour that any of the Daughters of Adam ever did, and knowing from whence, and for whose glory she had received it, returns the holy JESUS in a present to GOD again; for she had nothing so precious as himself to make oblation of; and besides that, every first-born among the Males was holy to the LORD; this child had an eternal and essential sanctity and until he came into the World, and was made apt for her to make present of him, there was never in the World any act of adoration proportionable to the honour of the great GOD; but now there was; and the holy Virgin made it, when she presented the holy child JESUS. And now besides that we are taught to return to GOD whatsoever we have received from him, if we unite our Offerings and Devotions to this holy Present, we shall by the merit and excellency of this Oblation exhibit to GOD an offertory, in which he cannot but delight for the combinations sake and society of his holy Son.

3. The holy Mother brought five Sicles, and a pair of Turtle Doves to redeem the Lamb of GOD from the Anathema; because every first-born was to be sacrificed to GOD, or redeem'd if it was clean; it was the poor Mans price, and the holy JESUS was never set at the greater prices, when he was estimated upon earth. For he that was LORD of the Kingdom chose his portion among the poor of this World, that he might advance the poor to the riches of his inheritance, And so it was from his Nativity hither. For at his Birth he was poor, at his Circumcision poor, and in the likeness of a sinner; at his Presentation poor, and like a sinner and a servant, for he chose to be redeemed with an ignoble price. The five sicles were given to the Priest for the redemption of the Child; and if the Parents were not able, he was to be a servant of the Temple, and to minister in the inferior offices to the Priest; and this was GODS seizure and possession of him; for although all the servants of GOD are his inheritance, yet the Ministers of Religion who derive their portion of temporals from his title, who live upon the Corban, and eat the meat of the Altar which is GODS peculiar, and come neerer to his holiness by the addresses of an immediate ministration, are GODS own upon another and a distinct challenge; but because CHRIST was to be the Prince of another Ministry, and the chief Priest of another Order; he was redeemed from attending the Mosaick rites, which he came to abolish, that he might do his Fathers business in establishing the Evangelical. Only remember, that the Ministers of Religion are but GODS usufructuaries, as they are not Lords of GODS portion, and therefore must dispence it like Stewards, not like Masters; so the People are not their Patrons in paying, nor they their beneficiaries in receiving tithes or other provisions of maintenance; they owe for it to none but to GOD himself, and it would also be considered, that in all sacrilegious detentions of Ecclesiastical rites, GOD is the person principally injured.

4. The Turtle Doves were offered also with the signification of another mystery. In the Sacred Rites of marriage, although the permissions of natural desires are such as are most ordinate to their ends, the avoiding Fornication, the alleviation of Oeconomical cares and vexations, and the production of children, and mutual comfort and support; yet the apertures and permissions of marriage have such restraints of modesty and prudence

* Sed puerilem istam
plura, & neque non
adulterium: oporget
idem non violare
Pam. 12. 2. 53.

as all transgression of the just order to such ends is a crime; and besides these, there may be degrees of inordination or obliquity of intention, or too sensual complacency or unhandfom preparations of minde or unsacramental thoughts; in which particulars, because we have no determin'd rule but prudence, and the analogy of the rite & the severity of our Religion, which allow in some cases more, in some lesse, and always uncertain latitudes; for ought we know there may be lighter transgressions that we know not of, and for these at the purification of the woman it is supposed the offering was made, and the turtures, by being an oblation, did deprecate a supposed irregularity; but by being a chaste and marital Embleme, they professed the obliquity (if any were) was within the protection of the sacred bands of marriage; and therefore so excusable as to be expiated by a cheap offering, and what they did in Hieroglyphick, Christians must do in the exposition; be strict observers of the main rites and principal obligations; and not neglectful to deprecate the lesser unhandfomenesses of the too sensual applications.

GOD had at that instant so ordered, that for great ends of his own and theirs, two very holy persons of divers Sexes and like piety, *Simeon* and *Anna*, the one who lived an active and secular, the other a retired and contemplative life, should come into the Temple by revelation and direction of the holy Spirit; and see him whom they and all the World did look for, the LORD'S CHRIST, the consolation of *Israel*. They saw him, they joyced, they worshipped, they prophesied, they sang Hymnes; and old *Simeon* did comprehend and circumscribe in his armes him that filled all the World, and was then so satisfied that he desired to live no longer; GOD had verified his promise, had shown him the *Messias*, had filled his heart with joy, and made his old age honourable; and now after all this sight, no object could be pleasant but the joyes of *Paradise*: for as a Man who hath star'd too freely upon the face and beauties of the Sun, is blinde and dark to objects of a lesse splendour, and is forc'd to shut his eyes, that he may through the degrees of darknesse perceive the inferiour beauties of more proportioned objects: so was old *Simeon*; his eyes were so filled with the glories of this revelation, that he was willing to close them in his last night; that he might be brought into the communications of eternity; and he could never more finde comfort in any other object this world could minister: for such is the excellency of spiritual things, when they have once filled the corners of our hearts, and made us highly sensible and apprehensive of interior beauties of GOD and of Religion, all things of this World are flat and empty and unsatisfying vanities, as unpleasant as the lees of Vineger to a tongue filled with the spirit of high Italicke wines. And until we are so dead to the World as to apprehend no gust or freer complacency in exterior objects; we never have entertained CHRIST or have had our cups overflow with devotion or filled with the Spirit. When our Chalice is filled with holy oil, with the anointing from above, it will entertain none of the waters of bitterness, or if it does, they are thrust to the bottome, they are the lowest of our desires, and therefore onely admitted, because they are natural and constituent.

The good old Prophetesse *Anna*, had lived long in chaste Widowhood, in the service of the Temple, in the continuall offices of De-

F

votion,

Devotion, in fasting and prayer; and now came the happy instant in which GOD would give her a great benediction and an earnest of a greater: the returns of prayer and the blessings of piety are certain; and though not dispensed according to the expectances of our narrow conceptions, yet at such times and in such measures as shall crown the piety and satisfy the desires and reward the expectation. It was in the Temple, the same place where she had for so many years poured out her heart to GOD, that GOD pour'd forth his heart to her, sent his Son from his bosom, and there she received his benediction; indeed in such places GOD does most particularly exhibit himself, and blessing goes along with him where ever he goes; in holy places GOD hath put his holy Name, and to holy persons GOD does oftentimes manifest the interior and more secret glories of his holiness; provided they come thither as old *Simeon* and *Anna* did by the motions of the holy Spirit, not with designs of vanity or curiosity or sensuality, for such spirits as those come to prophane and defecrate the house, and unhallow the person, and provoke the Deity of the place, and blast us with unwholesome aires.

7.

But *Joseph* and *Mary* wondred at these things which were spoken, and treasured them in their hearts, and they became matter of Devotion, and mental Prayer, or *Meditation*.



The PRAYER.

O Eternal GOD, who by the inspirations of thy holy Spirit didst direct thy servants *Simeon* and *Anna* to the Temple at the instant of the presentation of the holy child *JESUS*, that so thou mightest verifie thy promise and manifest thy Son, and reward the piety of holy people, who longed for Redemption by the coming of the *Messias*; give me the perpetual assistance of the same Spirit to be as a Monitor and a guide to me, leading me to all holy affections, and to the embraces and possessions of thy glorious Son; and remember all thy faithful people who wait for the consolation and redemption of the Church from all her miseries and persecutions, and at last satisfy their desires by the revelations of thy mercies and salvation. Thou hast advanced thy holy Child and set him up for a signe of thy mercies, & a representation of thy glories. LORD let no act, or thought, or word of mine ever be in contradiction to this blessed signe, but let it be for the ruine of all my vices and all the powers, the Devil employes against the Church, and for the raising up all those virtues and graces which thou didst designe me in the purposes of Eternity; but let my portion never be amongst the incredulous, or the scornful, or the Heretical, or the prophane, or any of those who stumble at this stone which thou hast laid for the foundation of thy Church, and the structures of a virtuous life; remember me with much mercy and compassion when the sword of sorrows or afflictions shall pierce my heart: first transfix me with love, and then all the troubles of this world will be consignations to the joyes of a better; which grant for the mercies and the name sake of thy holy child *JESUS*. Amen.

Discourse

Discourse 3.

Of MEDITATION.

IF in the definition of Meditation I should call it an unaccustomed and unpractised duty, I should speak a truth, though somewhat inartificially: for not onely the interiour beauties and brighter excellencies are as unfelt as Ideas and abstractions are, but also the practice and common knowledge of the duty it self are strangers to us, like the retirements of the deep or the undiscovered treasures of the Indian hills. And this is a very great cause of the drynesse and expiration of Mens Devotion, because our souls are so little refreshed with the waters and holy dewes of Meditation. We go to our prayers by chance, or order, or by determination of accidental occurrences; and we recite them as we read a book; and sometimes we are sensible of the duty, and a flash of Lightning makes the room bright, and our prayers end and the lightning is gone, and we as dark as ever. We draw our water from standing pools, which never are fill'd but with sudden showres, and therefore we are dry so often: Whereas if we would draw water from the Fountains of our SAVIOUR, and derive them through the channel of diligent and prudent Meditations, our devotion would be a continual current, and safe against the barrennesse of frequent droughts.

For Meditation is an attention and application of spirit to divine things, a searching out all instruments to a holy life, a devout consideration of them, and a production of those affections which are in a direct order to the love of GOD, and a pious conversation. Indeed meditation is all that great instrument of piety whereby it is made prudent, and reasonable, and orderly, and perpetual. For supposing our memory instructed with the knowledge of such mysteries, and revelations that are apt to entertain the Spirit, the understanding is first and best employed in the consideration of them, and then the will in their reception, when they are duly prepared and so transmitted: and both these in such manner and to such purposes that they become the Magazine and great repositories of grace, and instrumental to all designs of vertue.

For the understanding is not to consider the matter of any meditation in it self, or as it determines in naturall excellencies or unworthinesse respectively, or with a purpose to furnish it self with notion and riches of knowledge: for that is like the Winter-Sunne, it shines but warms not; but in such order as themselves are put in the designations of Theology, in the order of Divine Laws, in their spiritual capacity and as they have influence upon holinesse: for the understanding

here is something else besides the intellectual power of the Soul, it is the Spirit, that is, it is celestial in its application, as it is spiritual in its nature: and we may understand it well by considering the beatifical portions of soul and body in their future glories. For therefore even our bodies in the Resurrection shall be spiritual, because the operation of them shall be in order to spiritual glories, and their natural actions such as are seeing and speaking shall have a spiritual object and supernatural end; and here as we partake of such excellencies and cooperate to such purposes men are more or less spiritual; and so is the understanding taken from its first and lowest ends of resting in notion and ineffective contemplation, and is made spirit (that is) wholly ruled and guided by GODS Spirit to supernatural ends and spiritual employments; so that it understands and considers the motions of the Heavens to declare the glory of GOD, the prodigies and alterations in the firmament to demonstrate his handy-work; it considers the excellent order of creatures, that we may not disturb the order of creation, or dissolve the golden chain of subordination: Aristotle and Porphyry and the other Greek Philosophers, studied the Heavens to search out their natural causes and production of bodies; the wiser Chaldees and Assyrians studied the same things, that they might learn their influences upon us and make predictions of contingencies; the more moral Egyptian described his Theoremes in Hieroglyphicks and phantastick representments to teach principles of Policy, Oeconomy, and other prudences of morality and secular negotiation: But the same Philosophy when it is made Christian, considers as they did, but to greater purposes, even, that from the book of the Creatures we may glorifie the Creatour, and hence derive arguments of worship and Religion; this is Christian Philosophy.

4.

I instance onely in considerations natural to spiritual purposes; but the same is the manner in all meditation, whether the matter of it be nature or revelation; for if we think of Hell and consider the infinity of its duration, and that its flames last as long as GOD lasts, and thence conjecture upon the rules of proportion, why a finite creature may have an infinite unnaturall duration, or think by what wayes a material fire can torment an immaterial substance, or why the Devils, who are intelligent and wise Creatures, should be so foolish as to hate GOD from whom they know every rivulet of amability derives? This is to study, not to meditate; for meditation considers any thing that may best make us to avoid the place, and to quit a vicious habit, or master and rectifie an untoward inclination, or purchase a vertue, or exercise one, so that meditation is an act of the understanding put to the right use.

5.

* τὸν παρὰ τὸν βω-
 στήναι ὑποψα-
 ρισμένην τοῖς
 ἰσχυροῦς καὶ τῶ-
 να καὶ τὸν ἑαυτοῦ
 ἀγρυπνῶν πλῆθος.
 Athena. l. 4.

For the holy JESUS, coming to redeem us from the bottomlesse pit, did it by lifting us up out of the puddles of impurity and the unwholesome waters of vanity; He redeemed us from our vain conversation; and our understandings had so many vanities that they were made instruments of great impiety. The unlearned and ruder Nations had fewer vertues, but they had also fewer vices then the wise Empires, that ruled the World with violence and wit together. The foster * Asians had lust and intemperance in a full Chalice; but their understandings were ruder then the finer Latines, for these

mens

mens understandings distill'd wickedness, as through a Limbeck, and the Romans drank spirits and the sublim'd quintessences of villany, whereas the other made themselves drunk with the lees and cheaper instances of sinne: so that the understanding is not an idle and uselesse faculty but naturally derives to practice, and brings guests into the inward Cabinet of the will, and there they are entertained and feasted. And those understandings which did not serve the baser end of vices, yet were unprofitable for the most part, and furnished their inward rooms with glasses and beads and trifles fit for an American Mart; from all these impurities and vanities JESUS hath redeemed all his Disciples, and not onely thrown out of his Temples all the impure rites of *Flora* and *Cybele*, but also the trifling and unprofitable ceremonies of the more sober Deities, not onely vices but uselesse and unprofitable speculations, and hath consecrated our Head into a Temple, our Understanding to Spirit, our Reason to Religion, our Study to Meditation; and this is the first part of the Sanctification of our Spirit.

And this was the cause holy Scripture commands the duty of meditation in proportion still to the excellencies of piety and a holy life, to which it is highly and aptly instrumentall. *Blessed is the man that meditates in the Law of the LORD day and night.* And the reason of the proposition and the use of the duty is expressed to this purpose: *Thy words have I hid in my heart that I should not sinne against thee.* The placing and fixing those divine Considerations in our understandings and hiding them there, are designs of high Christian prudence, that they with advantage may come forth in the expresse of a holy life. For what in the World is more apt and naturall to produce humility, then to meditate upon the low stoopings and descents of the holy JESUS, to the nature of a Man, to the weaknesses of a Childe, to the poverties of a Stable, to the ignobleness of a Servant, to the shame of the Crosse, to the pains of Cruelty, to the dust of Death, to the title of a Sinner, and to the wrath of GOD? By this instance poverty is made honourable, and humility is sanctified and made noble, and the contradictions of nature are amiable and fitted for a wise Election. Thus hatred of sin, shame of our selves, confusion at the sense of humane misery, the love of GOD, confidence in his promises, desires of Heaven, holy resolutions, resignation of our own appetites, conformity to Divine will, oblations of our selves, repentance and mortification are the proper emanations from meditation of the sordidness of sinne, our proneness to it, our daily miseries as issues of Divine Vengeance, the glories of GOD, his infinite unalterable veracity, the satisfactions in the vision of GOD, the rewards of piety, the rectitude of the Laws of GOD, and perfection of his Sanctions, GODS supreme and paternall dominion, and his certain malediction of sinners; and when any one of these considerations is taken to pieces, and so placed in the rooms of application, that a piece of duty is conjoynd to a piece of the mystery; and the whole office to the purchase of a grace, or the extermination of a vice, it is like opening our windowes to let in the Sun and the Winde; and holiness is as proportioned an effect to this practice, as glory is to a persevering holiness, by way of reward and moral causality.

F 3

For

7.

For all the affections that are in Man are either natural, or by chance, or by the incitation of reason and discourse; our natural affections are not worthy the entertainments of a Christian; they must be supernatural and divine that put us into the hopes of Perfection and Felicities; and these other that are good, unless they come by meditation, they are but accidental, and set with the evening Sun: but if they be produced upon the strengths of pious meditation, they are as perpetual as they are reasonable, and excellent in proportion to the piety of the principle. A Garden that is watered with short and sudden showres is more uncertain in its fruits and beauties, then if a Rivulet waters it with a perpetual distilling and constant humectation: And just such are the short emissions and unpremeditated resolutions of piety begotten by a dath of holy rain from Heaven, whereby GOD sometimes uses to call the careless but to taste what excellencies of piety they neglect; but if they be not produc'd by the reason of Religion and the Philosophy of Meditation, they have but the life of a Fly or a tall Gourd; they come into the World onely to say they had a being, you could scarce know their length, but by measuring the ground they cover in their fall.

8.

For since we are more mov'd by material and sensible objects, then by things meely speculative and intellectual, and generats even in spiritual things are lesse perceived, and lesse motive then particulars: Meditation frames the understanding part of Religion to the proportions of our nature, and our weaknesse, by making some things more circumstantiate, and material, and the more spiritual to be particular, and therefore the more applicable: and the mystery is made like the Gospel to the Apostles, *Our eyes do see, and our ears do hear, and our hands do handle thus much of the word of Life* as is prepared for us in the Meditation.

9.

1. And therefore every wise person, that intends to furnish himself with affections of Religion, or detestation against a Vice, or glorifications of a Mystery, still will proportion the Mystery, and fit it with such circumstances of fancy and application, as by observation of himself he knows aptest to make impression. It was a wise designe of *Mark Antony* when he would stir up the people to revenge the death of *Cesar*, he brought his body to the pleading place, he shewed his wounds, held up the rent Mantle, and shewed them the garment that he put on that night in which he beat the *Nervi*, that is, in which he won a victory, for which his Memory was dear to them. He shewed them that wound which pierced his heart, in which they were placed by so deer a love, that he made them his heirs, and left to their publick use places of delight and pleasure; and then it was natural when he had made those things present to them which had once moved their love and his honour, that grief at the losse of so honourable and so lov'd a person should succeed; and then they were Lords of all, their sorrow and revenge seldom slept in two beds. And thus holy Meditation produces the passions and desires it intends, it makes the object present and almost sensible, it renews the first passions by a fiction of imagination, it passes from the Paschal Parlour to Cedron, it tells the drops of sweat, and measures them and findes them as big as drops of blood, and then conjectures at the greatnesse of our sins; it sears in the midst of *CHRISTS* agonies; it hears his groans, it spies *Judas* his Landhorn afar off, it follows *JESUS* to *Gabbatha*, and wonders at his innocence and their malice, and feels

feels the strokes of the Whip, and shrinks the head when the Crown of Thorns is thrust hard upon his holy brows, and at last goes step by step with JESUS, and carries part of the Cross, and is nailed fast with sorrow and compassion, and *dies with love*. For if the soul be principle of its own actions, it can produce the same effects by reflex acts of the understanding, when it is assisted by the imaginative part as when it sees the thing acted: only let the meditation be as minute, particular, and circumstance as it may; for a Widow by representing the caresses of her dead Husband love produces sorrow and the new affections of a sad indeerment. It is too sure, that the recalling the Circumstances of a past impurity does rekindle the flame and entertain the fancy with the burnings of an impure fire: And this happens not by any advantages of vice, but by the nature of the thing, and the efficacy of Circumstances. So does holy Meditation produce those impresses and signatures, which are the proper effects of the mystery, if presented in a right line and direct representation.

2. He that means to meditate in the best order to the productions of piety, must not be inquisitive for the highest mysteries, but the plainest propositions are to him of the greatest use and evidence. For Meditation is the duty of all, and therefore GOD hath fitted such matter for it, which is proportioned to every understanding, and the greatest mysteries of Christianity are plainest, and yet most fruitfull of Meditation, and most usefull to the production of Piety. High speculations are as barren as the tops of Cedar; but the fundamentals of Christianity are fruitfull as the Valleys or the creeping Vine. For know, that it is no meditation, but it may be an illusion, when you consider mysteries to become more learned without thoughts of improving piety. Let your affections be as high as they can climb towards GOD, so your considerations be humble, fruitful, and practically mysterious. *Oh, that I had the wings of a Dove, that I might fly away and be at rest*, said David. The wings of an Eagle would have carried him higher, but yet the innocent Dove did furnish him with the better Embleme to represent his humble designe; and lower meditations might sooner bring him to rest in GOD. It was a saying of *Aegidius*, *That an old and a simple woman, if she loves JESUS, may be greater then was Brother Bonaventure*. Want of learning and disability to consider great secrets of Theology does not at all retard our progresse to spiritual perfections; Love to JESUS may be better promoted by the plainer understandings of honest and unlettered people, then by the finer and more exalted speculations of great Clerks, that have less devotion. For although the way of serving GOD by the understanding be the best and most lasting, yet it is not necessary the understanding should be dress'd with troublesome and laborious notions; the reason that is in Religion is the surest principle to engage our services, and more perpetual then the sweetnes and the motives of affection, but every honest Mans understanding is then best furnished with the discourses and the reasonable parts of Religion, when he knows those mysteries of Religion upon which CHRIST and his Apostles did build a holy life and the superstructures of piety; those are the best materials of his meditation.

So that meditation is nothing else but the using of all those argu-

ments, motives and irradiations which GOD intended to be instrumental to piety. It is a composition of both wayes; for it stirs up our affections by reason and the way of understanding, that the wise soul may be satisfied in the reasonableness of the thing, and the affectionate may be entertained with the sweetnesses of holy passion; that our judgement be determined by discourse, and our appetites made active by the caresses of a religious fancy. And therefore the use of meditation is to consider any of the mysteries of Religion with purposes to draw from it, rules of life or affections to vertue, or detestation of vice; and from hence the Man rises to devotion and mental prayer and intercourse with GOD; and after that, he rests himself in the bosome of beatitude, and is swallowed up with the comprehensions of love and Contemplation. These are the several degrees of meditation; but let us first understand that part of it which is duty, and then if any thing succeed of a middle condition between duty and reward, we will consider also how that duty is to be performed, and how the reward is to be managed, that it may prove to be no illusion; therefore I adde also this Consideration.

12.

3. Whatsoever pious purposes and deliberations are entertained in the act of meditation, they are carefully to be maintained and thrust forward to actual performances, although they were indefinite and indeterminate, and no other wayes decreed but by resolutions and determinations of reason and judgement. For GOD assists every pious action according to its exigence and capacity, and therefore blesses holy meditations with results of reason, and prepossessions dogmatically decreeing the necessity of vertue, and the convenience of certain exercises in order to the purchase of it: he then that neglects to actuate such discourses, loses the benefit of his meditation; he is gone no further then when he first set out and neglects the inspirations of the holy Spirit. For if at any time it be certain what spirit it is that speaks within the soul, it is most certain that it is the good Spirit that moves us to an act of vertue in order to acquisition of the habit; and when GODS grace hath assisted us so far in our meditation, that we understand our duty and are moved with present arguments, if we put not forth our hand and make use of them, we do nothing towards our duty; and it is not certain that GOD will create graces in us as he does the soul; let every pious person think every conclusion of reason in his meditation to have pass'd an obligation upon him: and if he hath decreed that fasting so often, and doing so many religious acts is convenient and conducing to the production of a grace he is in pursuit of; let him know that every such decree, and reasonable proposition is the grace of GOD, instrumental to piety, part of his assistance, and therefore in no case to be extinguished.

13.

4. In meditation, let the understanding be restrained, and under such prudent coercion and confinement that it wander not from one discourse to another, till it hath perceived some fruit from the first: either that his soul be instructed in a duty, or mov'd by a new argument, or confirm'd in an old, or determin'd to some exercise and intermediall action of Religion, or hath broke out into some prayers and intercourse with GOD in order to the production of a vertue. And this is the my-
sicall desigene of the Spouse in the Canticles of Solomon, *I adjure you O you daughters of Jerusalem, by the Roes and by the Hinds of the field,*
that

that you stirre not up nor awake my love till he please. For it is lightnesse of spirit to passe over a field of flowers and to fix no where, but to leave it without carrying some honey with us; unlesse the subject be of it self barren and unfruitfull, and then why was it chosen? Or that it is made so by our indisposition, and then indeed it is to be quitted: but (it is *S. Chrysostoms* simile) as a Lamb sucking the breast of its dam and Mother moves the head from one part to another till it hath found a distilling fontinell; and then it fixes till it be satisfied or the fountain cease dropping: so should we in meditation, reject such materialls as are barren like the tops of hills, and fix upon such thoughts which nourish and refresh, and there dwell till the nourishment be drawn forth, or so much of it as we can then temperately digest.

5. In meditation, strive rather for graces then for gifts, for affections in the way of vertue more then the overflowings of sensible devotion; and therefore if thou findest any thing by which thou mayest be better, though thy spirit do not actually rejoyce or finde any gust or relish in the manducation, yet choose it greedily: For although the chief end of meditation be affection; and not determinations intellectuall, yet there is choice to be had of the affections, and care must be taken that the affections be desires of vertue or repudiations and aversions from something criminall; nor joyes and transportations spirituall, comforts and complacencies; for they are no part of our duty; sometimes they are encouragements, and sometimes rewards, sometimes they depend upon habitude and disposition of body, and seem great matters when they have little in them, and are more bodily then spirituall, like the gift of tears, and yerning of the howels; and sometimes they are illusions and temptations, at which if the soul stoops and be greedy after they may prove like *Hippomanes* golden apples to *Atalanta*; retard our course, and possibly do some hazard to the whole race. And this will be neerer reduced to practice, if we consider the variety of matter, which is fitted to the meditation in severall states of men travailing towards heaven.

For the first beginnings in religion are employed in the mastering of their first appetites, casting out their Devils, exterminating all evil customes, lessening the proclivity of habits and counterminding the too great forwardnesse of vicious inclinations; and this, which Divines call the *Purgative* way, is wholly spent in actions of repentance, Mortification and self deniall; and therefore if a penitent person snatches at comforts, or the tastes of sensible devotion his repentance is too delicate, it is but a rod of roses and Jessamine. If GOD sees the spirit broken all in pieces, and that it needs a little of the oyle of gladnesse for its support and restitution to the capacities of its duty, he will give it, but this is not to be designed, nor snatched at in the meditation; teares of joy are not good expressions nor instruments of repentance, we must not gather grapes from thorns, nor figs from thistles; no refreshments to be looked for here, but such onely as are necessary for support; and when GOD sees they are, let not us trouble our selves, he will provide them. But the meditations which are prompt to this *Purgative* way and practice of first beginners, is not apt to produce delicacies; but in the sequelle and consequent of it. *Afterwards it brings forth*

14

15

forth the pleasant fruit of righteousness, but for the present it hath no joy in it, no joy of sense though much satisfaction to reason. And such are meditations of the fall of Angels and Man, the Ejection of them from heaven, of our Parents from Paradise, the horror and obliquity of sin, the wrath of GOD the severity of his anger, mortification of our body and spirit, self denial, the Croſſe of CHRIST, Death and hell, and Judgements; the terrors of an evil Conscience, the insecurities of a Sinner; the unreasonableness of sin, the troubles of repentance, the Worm and sting of a burdened spirit, the difficulties of rooting our evil habits, and the utter abolition of sin; if these nettles bear honey, we may fill our selves; but such sweetnesses spoil the operations of these bitter potions. Here therefore let your addresses to GOD and your mentall prayers be affectionate desires of Pardon, humble considerations of our selves, thoughts of revenge against our Crimes, designs of mortification, indefatigable solicitations for mercy, expresses of shame and confusion of face; and he meditates best in the *purgative way* that makes these affections most operative and high.

16. After our first step is taken, and the punitive part of repentance is resolved on, and begun, and put forward into good degrees of progresse, we then enter into the *illuminative way of religion*; and set upon the acquit of vertues and the purchase of spirituall graces, and therefore our meditations are to be proportioned to the designe of that imploynment, such as are considerations of the life of JESUS, examples of Saints, reasons of vertue, means of acquiring them, designations of proper exercises to every pious habit, the eight beatitudes, the gifts and fruits of the holy Ghost, the promises of the Gospell, the attributes of GOD as they are revealed to represent GOD to be infinite and to make us religious, the rewards of heaven, excellent and select sentences of holy persons, to be as incentives of piety; These are the proper matter for proficients in religion; but then the affections producible from these are love of vertue, desires to imitate the holy JESUS, affections to Saints and holy persons, conformity of choice, subordination to GODS will, election of the wayes of vertue, satisfaction of the understanding in the wayes of religion, and resolutions to pursue them in the midst of all discomforts and persecutions; and our mentall prayers or intercourse with GOD which are the present emanations of our meditations, must be in order to these affections, and productions from those, and in all these yet, there is safety and piety and no seeking of our selves, but designs of vertue in just reason and duty to GOD and for his sake, that is, for his commandment. And in all these particulars, if there be such a sterility of spirit that there be no end served but of spirituall profit, we are never the worse; all that GOD requires of us is that we will live well and repent in just measure and right manner, and he that doth so, hath meditated well.

37. From hence if a pious soul passes to affections of greater sublimity, and intimate and more immediate, abstracted and immateriall love, it is well, only remember that the love, GOD requires of us, is an operative materiall and communicative love. *If ye love me keep my Commandments*; so that still a good life is the effect of the sublimest meditation; and if we make our duty sure behinde us, ascend up as high into the mountain as you can, so your affections may consist with the securities of your person, the condition of

For beyond this I have described, there is a degree of meditation so exalted, that it changes the very name, and is called *contemplation*, and it is in the unitive way of religion: that is, it consists in unions and adherencies to GOD; it is a prayer of quietness and silence, and a meditation extraordinary, a discourse without variety, a vision and intuition of divine excellencies, and immediate entry into an orb of light, and a resolution of all our faculties into sweetest affections and starings upon the Divine beauty; and is carried on to extasies, raptures, suspensions, elevations, abstractions, and apprehensions beatificall. In all the course of *venustus meditation*, the soul is like a Virgin invited to make a matrimonial contract, it inquires the condition of the person, his estate and disposition, and other circumstances of amiability and desire. But when she is satisfied with these enquiries and hath chosen her husband, she no more considers particulars, but is moved by his voice, and his gesture, and runs to his entertainment and fruition, and spends her self wholly in affections, not to obtain but enjoy his love.

Thus it is said.

But this is a thing not to be *discoursed* of, but *felt*, and although in other sciences the terms must first be known and then the rules, and conclusions scientificall: Here it is otherwise, for first the whole experience of this must be obtained, before we can so much as know what it is, and the end must be acquired first, the conclusion before the premises. They that pretend to these heights call them the secrets of the Kingdom; but they are such secrets, which no man can describe, such which GOD hath not revealed in the publication of the Gospel, such for the acquiring of which there are no means prescribed, and to which no man is obliged, and which are not in any mans power to obtain, nor such which it is lawful to pray for or desire, nor concerning which we shall ever be called to an account.

Indeed when persons have been long softened with the continuall droppings of religion, and their spirits made timorous and apt for impression by the assiduity of prayer and perpetuall alarms of death, and the continuall dyings of mortification; the fancy which is a very great instrument of devotion, is kept continually warm; and in a disposition and aptitude to take fire and to flame out in great ascents; and when they suffer transportations beyond the burdens and support of reason, they suffer they know not what and call it what they please, and other pious people that hear talk of it, admire that devotion which is so eminent and beatified (for so they esteem it) and so they come to be called raptures and extasies; which even amongst the Apostles were so seldom that they were never spoke of; for those visions, raptures, and intuitions of S. Steven, S. Paul, S. Peter,* and S. John were not pretended to be of this kinde; nor excesses of religion, but prophetickall and intuitive revelations to great and significant purposes, such as may be and are described in story: but these other cannot; for so *Cassian* reports and commends a saying of *Antony* the Hermit; *That is not a perfect prayer in which the votary does either understand himself or the prayer*, meaning that persons eminently religious were *Divina patientes* as *Diomysius Areopagite* said of his Master *Hierotheus*, Pathicks in Devotion, suffering ravishments of senses, transported beyond the uses of humanity into the suburbs of beatificall apprehensions: but whether or no

this

* *Act. 10. 10.*

immensus in a-
ventum.

& cap. 11. 5.

in visio de in-
terius.

Raptus

vidit visionem

dum oraverat

--- *merito q. d. quoniam*

expulsi, q. d. hominem

non sic quicquid iustit

perire quod de

Apoline dixit Lucan-

us.
Qualis erat visio sine
extasis Basiliani q. d.
visionem omnipotentis
visit, extasis sed re-
pelle oculis. Num.
34. q. 16.

that joyce and to mourn with them that mourn. and with these I shall be content: other exaltations of devotion I leave to Apostles and Apostolick men; the high hills are for the bars and the climbing goates, the stony rocks and the recesses of the earth for the conies. It is more healthfull and nutritive to dig the earth and to eat of her fruits then to stare upon the greatest glories of the heavens and live upon the beams of the Sun; so unsatisfying a thing is rapture and transportation to the soul; it often distracts the faculties, but seldom does advantage piety, and is full of danger in the greatest of its lustre. If ever a man be more in love with GOD by such instruments, or more indeered to vertue, or made more severe and watchfull in his repentance, it is an excellent grace and gift of GOD, but then this is nothing but the joyes and comfort of ordinary meditation; those extraordinary, as they have no sense in them so are not pretended to be instruments of vertue; but are like *Jonathans* arrows shot beyond it, to signifie the danger the man is in towards whom such arrows are shot; but if the person be made unquiet, unconstant, proud, puffillanimous, of high opinion, pertinacious and confident in uncertain judgements, or desperate, it is certain they are temptations and illusions, so that as all our dutie consists in the wayes of repentance and acquist of vertue; so there rests all our safety, and by consequence all our solid joyes; and this is the effect of ordinary, pious, and regular meditations.

26.

If I mistake not, there is a temptation like this under another name amongst persons whose religion hath lesse discourse and more fancie, and that is, a familiarity with GOD; which indeed if it were rightly understood is an affection consequent to the illuminative way, that is, an act, or an effect of the vertue of religion and Devotion, which consists in prayers and addressees to GOD, lauds and Eucharists, and hymns, and confidence of coming to the throne of grace, upon assurance of GODS veracity and goodnesse infinite: so that familiarity with GOD, which is an affection of friendship, is the entercourse of giving and receiving blessings and graces respectively: and it is produced by a holy life, or the being in the state of grace, and is part of every mans inheritance that is a friend of GOD. But when familiarity with GOD shall be esteemed a priviledge of singular and eminent persons not communicated to all the faithfull, and is thought to be an admission to a neerer entercourse of secrecy with GOD, it is an effect of pride and a mistake in judgement concerning the very same thing which the old Divines call the unitive way, if themselves that claim it understood the terms of art, and the consequents of their own intentions.

27.

Onely I shall observe one Circumstance, that familiarity with GOD is nothing else but an admission to be of GODS family, the admission of a servant or a son in minority, and implyes obedience, duty, and fear on our parts; care and providence and love on GODS part: And it is not the familiarity of sons, but the impudence of proud equals to expresse this pretended priviledge in even unmannerly and unreverent addressees and discourses: and it is a sure rule, that whatsoever heights of piety, union or familiarity any man pretends to, it is of the Devil unless the greater the pretence be, the greater also be the humility of the man. The highest flames are the most tremulous; and so are the most holy and eminent religious persons, more full of awfulness and fear and modesty and humility;

fo

so that in true Divinity and right speaking there is no such thing as the unitive way of religion, save onely in the effects of duty, obedience and the expresse of the precise vertue of religion. Meditations in order to a good life let them be as exalted, as the capacitie of the person and subject will endure; up to the height of contemplation; but if contemplation comes to be a distinct thing and something besides or beyond a distinct degree of vertuous meditation, it is lost to all sense and religion and prudence. Let no man be hasty to eat of the fruits of Paradise before his time.

And now I shall not need to enumerate the blessed fruits of holy Meditation, for it is a grace that is instrumentall to all effects, to the production of all vertues and the extinction of all vices, and by consequence the inhabitation of the holy Ghost within us, is the naturall or proper emanation from the frequent exercise of this duty, onely it hath something particularly excellent, besides its generall influence: for meditation is that part of prayer which knits the soul to its right object, and confirms and makes actuall our intention and devotion. Meditation is the tongue of the soul and the language of our spirit; and our wandering thoughts in prayer are but the neglects of meditation, and recessions from that duty; and according as we neglect meditation, so are our prayers imperfect; meditation being the soul of prayer, and the intention of our spirit. But in all other things meditation is the instrument and conveyance; it habituates our affections to heaven, it hath permanent content, it produces constancy of purpose, despising of things below, inflamed desires of vertue, love of GOD, self denyall, humility of understanding and univiersall correction of our life and manners.

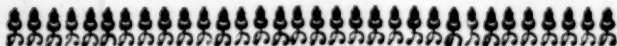
28.



The PRAYER.

Holy and Eternall JESUS whose whole life and doctrine was a perpetuall sermon of holy life, a treasure of wisdom and a repository of Divine materialls for meditation, give me grace to understand, diligence and attention to consider, care to lay up, and carefulnesse to reduce to practice all these actions, discourses and pious lessons and intimations by which thou dost expressly teach, or tacitely imply, or mysteriously signify our duty: Let my understanding become as spirituall in its employment and purposes as it is immateriall in its nature: fill my memory as a vessell of election with remembrances and notions highly compunctive, and greatly incentive of all the parts of sanctity. Let thy holy Spirit dwell in my soul instructing my knowledge,

ledge, sanctifying my thoughts, guiding my affections, directing my will in the aboice of vertue, that it may be the great imployment of my life to meditate in thy law to study thy preceptive will, to understand even the niceties and circumstantialls of my duty, that ignorance may neither occasion a sinne nor become a punishment: take from me all vanity of spirit, lightnesse of fancy, curiosity and impertinency of enquiry, illusions of the Devill and phantastick deceptions: let my thoughts be as my religion, plain, honest, pious, simple, prudent and charitable, of great imployment and force to the production of vertues and extermination of vice, but suffering no transportations of sense and vanity, nothing greater then the capacities of my soul, nothing that may minister to any intemperances of spirit, but let me be wholly inebriated with love, and that love wholly spent in doing such actions as best please thee in the conditions of my infirmity and the securities of humility, till thou shalt please to draw the curtain and reveal thy interior beauties in the kingdom of thy eternall glories: which grant for thy mercies sake O Holy and Eternall JESU. Amen-



Señ.



Egypt.



And therefore since GOD already had hindred him from the execution of a distinguishing sword, he resolv'd to send a sword of indiscrimi-
nation and confusion, hoping that if he killed all the babes of *Bethlehem*,
this young kings reign all should soon determine. *He therefore sent forth
and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem and all the coast round about
two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the
Wise-men.* For this execution was in the beginning of the second year after
CHRISTS nativity as in all probability we guesse; not at the two years end,
as some suppose, because as his malice was subtill, so he intended it should
be secure, and though he had been diligent in his inquiry, and was need
the time in his computation, yet he that was never sparing of the lives of
others, would now to secure his Kingdom rather overact his severity for
some moneths, than by doing execution but just to the title of his account
hazard the escaping of the *Messias*.

This execution was sad, cruel and universal: no abatements made for the dire shriekings of the Mothers no tender hearted fouldier was employed, no hard hearted person was softened by the weeping eyes, and pitty-begging looks of those mothers, that wondred how it was possible any person should hurt their pretty sucklings; no connivencies there, no protections or friendships, or consideration, or indulgencies, but Herod caused that his own childe which was at nurse in the coasts of Bethlehem should bleed to death; which made Augustus Cesar to say that in Herods house it were better to be a hog then a childe: because the custome of the nation did secure a hog from Herods knife, but no religion could secure his childe. The sword being thus made sharp by Herods commission killed 14000 pretty babes, as the Greeks in their Calendar, and the Abyssines of Ethiopia do commemorate in their offices of Liturgy. For Herod crafty and malicious, that is perfectly * tyrant had caused all the children to be gathered together; which the credulous northerns (supposing it had been to take account of their age and number in order to some taxing) hindred not, but unwittingly suffered themselves and their babes to be betrayed to an irremediable butchery.

G

Then

Sic air gloria ordinaria sed Oomphrus in factis air hanc causam biennio post Christum natum contigit.

3.
Macrobius Saturn.
lib. 3. cap. 4.
*Qualis apud Lu-
cianum describi-
tur tyrannicus.

[illegible]

SECT. 6. HISTORY OF THE DEATH OF THE INNOCENTS

Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the Prophet, saying, Lamentation and weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children and would not be comforted. All the synonymas of sadness were little enough to expresse this great weeping when 12000 mothers in one day saw their pretty babes pouring forth their blood into that bosom whence not long before they had sucked milk, and instead of those pretty smiles which use to enertain the fancy and dear affections of their mothers, nothing but affrighting shrieks and then ghastly looks; the mourning was great, like the mourning in the valley of Hinnom, and there was no Comforter; their sorrow was too big to be cured till it should lie down alone and rest with its own weariness.

3.

But the malice of Herod went also into the hill country, and hearing that of John the son of Zechary, great things were spoken, by which he was designed to a great ministry about this young Prince, he attempted in him also to rescind the Prophecies, and sent a messenger of death towards him; but the Mothers care had been early with him, and sent him into desert places, where he continued till the time appointed of his manifestation unto Israel. But as the children of Bethlehem died in the place of CHRIST, so did the Father of the Baptist dye for his child. For Herod slew Zechary between the temple and the Altar, * because he refused to betray his son to the fury of that rabid bear: Though some persons very eminent amongst the stars of the Primitive Church, * report a tradition, that a place being separated in the Temple for Virgins, Zechary suffered the Mother of our Lord to abide there after the birth of her holy Son, affirming her still to be a Virgin; and that for this reason, not Herod, but the scribes and Pharisees did kill Zechary.

* Sic Chrysost.
& Petrus Mar-
tyr episc. Alex-
andr. Niceph. &
Cedrenus,
* Sic aliq. ori-
gen tract. 23.
in evang. Matth.
S. Basil. homil.

de humana Christi generatione, Nyssen in natali Christi. Cyrill adv. Anthropomorphitas.

6.

a In scorpiace.
cap. 2.

Tertullian * reports that the blood of Zechary had so besmeared the stones of the pavement which was the altar on which the good old Priest was sacrificed, that no act or industry could wash the tincture out; the dye and guilt being both indeleble; as if, because GOD did intend to exact of that nation all the blood of righteous persons from Abel to Zechary who was the last of the Martyrs of the synagogue, he would leave a character of their guilt in their eyes to upbraid their irreligion, cruelty and infidelity. But the first great instance of the Divine vengeance for these executions was upon Herod; who in very few years after, was smitten of GOD with so many plagues and torments, that himself alone seemed like an hospitall of the Incurabili: For he was tormented with a soft slow fire, like that of burning iron: or the cinders of Yew, in his body; in his bowels with intolerable Colicks and ulcers, in his natural parts with worms, in his feet with gout, in his nerves with convulsions, difficulty of breathing; and out of divers parts of his body issued out so impure and ulcerous a stream, that the loathsomness, pain and indignation made him once to snatch a knife with purpose to have killed himself, but that he was prevented by a Nephew of his, that stood there in his attendance.

7.

But as the flesh of beasts grows callous by stripes, and the pressures of the yoke: so did the heart of Herod, by the loads of Divine vengeance. GOD began his hell here, and the pains of hell never made any man
less

leſſe impious; for Herod perceiving that he muſt now die * firſt put to * death his ſon Ariſtarchus under pretence that he would have poſſeſſion of the kingdom, and that the laſt ſcene of his life might for pure malice and envied ſpite out-do all the reſt, becauſe he believed the Jewiſh nation would rejoyce at his death, he aſſembled all the nobles of the people and put them in priſon, giving in charge to his ſiſter Salome, that when he was expiring his laſt, all the nobility ſhould be ſlain, that his death might be lamented with a perfect and univerſall ſorrow.

BUT GOD thus brings to nought the counſels of wicked Priſoners, and ſet on the deſigne againſt the judgement of Herod; for when he was dead and could not call his ſiſter to account for diſobeying his moſt bloody and unrighteous commands, ſhe releaſed all the impriſoned and deſpairing Gentlemen, and made the day of her Brothers death a perfect Jubilee, a day of joy, ſuch as was that when the nation was delivered from the violence of Haman in the dayes of Purim.

And all this while GOD had provided a ſanctuary for the holy Child JEſUS. For GOD ſeeing the ſecret purpoſes of blood which Herod had, ſent his Angel who appeared to Joſeph in a dream, ſaying, *Arise and take the young child and his Mother and fly into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word, for Herod will ſeek the young child to deſtroy him; then he aroſe and took the young child and his Mother by night and departed into Egypt; And they made their firſt abode in Hermapolis in the countrey of Thebais* whither when they firſt arrived, the child JEſUS being by deſigne or providence carried into a Temple, all the ſtatues of the Idol gods fell down, like Dagon at the preſence of the Ark, and ſuffered their timely and juſt diſſolution and diſhonour. According to the prophecy of Iſaiah: *Behold the Lord ſhall come into Egypt and the Idolls of Egypt ſhall be moved at his preſence.* And in the liſe of the Prophet Jeremy, written by Epiphanius it is reported, that he told the Egyptian Priests that then their Idols ſhould be broken in pieces, when a holy Virgin with her child ſhould enter into their countrey, which prophecy poſſibly might be the cauſe that the Egyptians did, beſide their vanities, worſhip alſo an infant in a manger, and a Virgin in her bed.

From Hermapolis to Maturæ went theſe holy Pilgrims in purſuance of their ſafety and proviſions, where it was reported they dwelt in a garden of balſame, till Joſeph being at the end of ſeven yeers (as it is commonly believed) aſcertained by an Angel of the death of Herod and commanded to return to the land of Iſrael he was obedient to the heavenly viſion, and returned. But hearing that Archelaus did reign in the place of his Father, and knowing that cruelty and the ambition of Herod was hereditary or intayled upon Archelaus, being alſo warned to turn aſide into the parts of Gaſilee, which was of a diſtinct jurisdiction governed indeed by one of Herods ſons, but not by Archelaus, thither he diverted, and there that holy family remained in the city of Nazareth, whence the holy child had the appellation of a Nazarene.

Math. 2. 131

Euseb. de demonſtr. c. 10.
S. Athanaſ. lib. de incarnat. vob. bi. Palladius in vita S. Apollon. Iſai. 19. 1.

Dorotheus in ſynoph. Pallad. in vita Apollon.



Ad. Sect. 6.

Considerations upon the death of the Innocents, and the flight of holy JESUS into EGYPT.

Herod having called the wise men, and received information of their designe, and the Circumstances of the childe pretended religion too, and desired them to bring him word, when they had found the babe, that he might come and worship him; meaning to make a sacrifice of him, to whom he should pay his adoration: and instead of investing the young Prince with a Royall purple he would have stained his swadling bands with his blood. It is ever dangerous when a wicked Prince pretends religion, his designe is then softened by how much it needs to put on a fairer outside: but it was an early policy in the world, and it concerned mens interests to seem religious, when they thought that to be so, was an abatement of great designs. When Jezebel designed the robbing and destroying Naboth, she sent to the Elders to proclaim a fast; for the externall and visible remonstrances of religion leave in the spirits of men a great reputation of the seeming person, and therefore they will not rush into a furious sentence against his actions, at least not judge them with prejudice against the man towards whom they are so fairly prepared, but do some violence to their own understanding, and either disbelieve their own reason, or excuse the fact, or think it but an error, or a lesse crime, or the incidencies of humanity, or however, are so long in decreeing against him, whom they think to be religious, that the rumour is abated, or the stream of indignation is diverted by other laborious arts intervening before our zeale is kindled, and so the person is unjudged or at least the designe secured.

But in this humane policy was exceedingly infatuated, and though Herod had trusted his designe to no keeper but himself, and had pretended fair, having religion for the word, and called the wise men privately, and intrusted them with no injoyment but a civill request, an account of their successe of the journey, which they had no reason or desire to conceal; yet his heart was opened to the eye of heaven, and the sun was not more visible then his dark purpose was to GOD and it succeeded accordingly; the childe was sent away, the wisemen warned not to return, Herod was mocked and enraged; and so his craft became foolish and vain; and so are all counsells intended against GOD, or any thing of which he himself hath undertaken the protection. For although we understand not the reasons of security, because we see not
 that

that admirable concentrating of infinite things in the Divine Providence, whereby God brings his purposes to act by wayes unlookt for, and sometimes contradictory; yet the publike and perpetuall experience of the world hath given continuall demonstrations, that all evil counsells have come to nought, that the succeeding of an impious design is no argument that the man is prosperous; that the curse is then surest, when his fortune spreads the largest; that the contradiction and impossibilities of deliverance to pious persons are but an opportunity and engagement for GOD to do wonders, and to glorifie his power and to exalt his mercy by the instances of miraculous or extraordinary events; and as the afflictions happening to good men are alleviated by the support of Gods good Spirit; and enduring them here are but consignations to an honourable amends hereafter; so the succeeding prosperities of fortunate impiety, when they meet with punishment in the next or in the third age, or in the deletion of a people five ages after, are the greatest arguments of Gods providence, who keeps wrath in store, and forgets not to do judgement for all them that are oppressed with wrong; It was laid up with God, and was perpetually in his eye, being the matter of a lasting durable and unremitted anger.

But God had care of the holy childe; he sent his Angel to warn *Joseph* with the babe and his Mother to flye into *Egypt*. *Joseph* and *Mary* instantly arises, and without enquiry how they shall live there, or when they shall return, or how be secur'd, or what accommodations they shall have in their Journey, at the same houre of the night begin the pilgrimage with the cheerfulness of obedience, and the securities of faith, and the confidence of hope, and the joyes of love, knowing themselves to be recompenc'd for all the trouble they could endure, that they were instruments of the safety of the holy JESUS, that they then were serving God, that they were encircled with the securities of the divine providence, and in these dispositions all places were alike; for every region was a Paradise where they were in company with JESUS. And indeed that man wants many degrees of faith and prudence who is solicitous for the support of his necessities, when he is doing the commandment of God. If he commands thee to offer a sacrifice, himself will provide a Lambe, or enable thee to finde one; and he would remove thee into a state of separation, where thy body needs no supplies of provision, if he meant thou shouldst serve him without provisions; he will certainly * take away thy need, or satifie it, he will feed thee himself as he did the Israelites, or take away thy hunger as he did to *Moses*, or send ravens to feed thee as he did to *Elias*, or make charitable people minister to thee as the widow to *Elisba*, or give thee his own portion as he maintained the Levites, or make thine enemies to pity thee as the Assyrians did the captive Jewes; For whatsoever the world hath, and whatsoever can be conveyed by wonder, or by providence, all that is thy security for provisions, so long as thou doest the work of God; and remember that the assurance of blessing, and health, and salvation is not made by doing what we list, or being where we desire, but by doing Gods will, and being in the place of his appointment; we may be safe in *Egypt*, if we be there in obedience to God, and wee may perish among the babes of *Bethlehem*, if we be there by our owne election.

Joseph and *Mary* did not argue against the Angels message; because they had

— τὰς δὲ ἑξῆς
τιμὰς οὐδὲ, ἀ-
ποστολὴν μακρινὴν
ἐχὺς δ' ἴσμεν.
Εὐαγγ.

Heb. 13. 5, 6.

a confidence of their charge, who with the breath of his mouth could have destroyed *Herod*, though he had been abetted with all the legions marching under the Roman Eagles; but they, like the two Cherubims about the propitiatory, took the child between them, and fled, giving way to the fury of persecution, which possibly when the materials are withdrawn might expire, and dye like fire, which else would rage for ever. JESUS fled, undertook a sad journey, in which the roughness of the wayes, his own tenderness, the youth of his Mother, the old age of his supposed Father, the smallness of their viaticum and accommodation for their voyage, the no kindred they were to go to, hopelesse of comforts and exteriour supplies were so many circumstances of poverty, and lesser strokes of the persecution; things that himself did choose to remonstrate the verity of his nature, the infirmity of his person, the humility of his spirit, the austerity of his undertaking, the burden of his charge, and by which he did teach us the same vertues he then expressed, and also consign'd this permission to all his Disciples in future ages, that they also may flye from their persecutors, when the case is so, that their work is not done; that is, they may glorifie God with their lives more then with their death; and of this they are ascertained by the arguments of prudent account; for sometimes we are called to glorifie God by dying, and the interest of the Church, and the faith of many may be concerned in it; then we must abide by it. In other cases it is true that *Demisthenes* said in *Apology* for his own escaping from a lost field, *A man that runs away may fight again.* And *S. Paul* made use of a guard of Souldiers to rescue him from the treachery of the Jewish Rulers, and of a basket to escape from the Inquisition of the Governour of *Damascus*; and the Primitive Christians, of Grotts and subterraneous retirements, and *S. Athanasius* of a faire Ladies house, and others of deserts and graves, as knowing it was no shame to flye, when their Master himself had fled, that his time and his work might be fulfilled, and when it was, he then laid his life down.

5. It is hard to set down particular rules that may indefinitely guide all persons in the stating of their own case; because all things that depend upon circumstances are alterable unto infinite. But as GODS glory and the good of the Church are the great considerations to be carried before us all the way, and in proportions to them we are to determine and judge our Questions: so also our infirmities are allowable in the scrutiny; for I doubt not but GOD intended it a mercy and a compliance with humane weakness, when he gave us this permission, as well as it was a designe to secure the opportunities of his service, and the consummation of his owne work by us. And since our feares and the incommodities of flight, and the sadness of exile, and the insecurities and inconveniencies of a strange and new abode are part of the persecution; provided that Gods glory be not certainly and apparently neglected, nor the Church evidently scandalized by our flight, all interpretations of the question in favour of our selves, and the declension of that part which may tempt us to apostacie, or hazard our confidence, and the choosing the lesser part of the persecution is not against the rule of faith, and alwayes hath in it lesse glory, but oftentimes more security.

6. But thus far *Herods* ambition transported him even to resolutions of murder of the highest person, the most glorious and the most innocent upon earth;

*Αποφ. ἡ παύση
ἐν τῇ ἐκείνῃ
καταστάσει.

Earth; and it represents that passion to be the most troublesome and vexatious thing that can afflict the sons of men. *Vertue* hath not half so much trouble in it; it sleeps quietly without startings and affrighting fancies it looks cheerfully, smiles with much serenity, and though it laughs not often, yet it is ever delightful in the apprehensions of some faculty: it fears no man, nor nothing, nor is it discompoled; and hath no concerns in the great alterations of the World; and entertains death like a Friend, and reckons the issues of it, as the greatest of its hopes, but *ambition* is full of distractions, it teems with stratagems, as *Rebecca* with struggling twinned, and is swelled with expectation as with a tympany, and sleeps sometimes as the winde in a storme, still and quiet for a minute, that it may burst out into an impetuous blast till the chordage of his heartstrings crack; seares when none is nigh, and prevents things which never had intention, and falls under the inevitability of such accidents, which either could not be foreseen or not prevented: it is an infinite labour to make a Mans self miserable, and the utmost acquit is so goodly a purchase, that he makes his dayes full of sorrow to enjoy the troubles of a three yeers reign; for *Herod* lived but three yeeres or five at the most after the flight of *JESUS* into Egypt. And therefore there is no greater unreasonableness in the world then in the designs of ambition; for it makes the present certainly miserable, unsatisfied, troublefom and discontent; for the uncertain acquit of an honour, which nothing can secure; and besides a thousand possibilities of miscarrying, it relies upon no greater certainty then our life, and when we are dead all the world sees who was the fool. But it is a strange caitivensse and baseness of disposition of men so furiously and unsariably to run after perishing and uncertain interests in defiance of all the reason and religion of the world, and yet to have no appetite to such excellencies which satisfy reason and content the spirit, and create great hopes and ennoble our expectation, and are advantages to communities of men and publike societies, and which all wise men teach and all religion commands.

And it is not amisse to observe how *Herod* vexed himselfe extremely upon a mistake; the childe *JESUS* was born a King, but it was a King of all the world not confined within the limits of a province, like the weaker beauties of a torch to shine in one room, but like the sun, his Empire was over all the world; and if *Herod* would have become but his tributary and paid him the acknowledgments of his Lord he should have had better conditions then under *Cesar*, and yet have been as absolute in his own Jewry as he was before; his kingdom was not of this World, and he that gives heavenly kingdoms to all his servants would not have stooped to have taken up *Herods* petty Coronet; but as it is a very vanity which ambition seeks, so it is a shadow that disturbs and discomposes all its motions and apprehensions.

And the same mistake caused calamities to descend upon the Church: for some of the persecutions commenced upon pretence Christianity was an Enemy to government: But the pretence was infinitely unreasonable, and therefore had the fate of senselesse allegations, it disbanded presently; for no externall accident did so incorporate the excellence of *CHRISTS* religion into the hearts of men, as the innocence of the men, their inoffensive deportment, the modesty of their designs, their great humility and obedience, a life expressly in enmity and contestation against secular ambition; and it is to be feared that the mingling humane interests with

7.
Dubia pro certis se-
lent timere Reges,
Seneca Oedip.

Hæc illi Herodes imple
Cultrum venit quid
times?
Non auster terræstris
Qui regna dat cælestia
Qui corpora duro fa-
cis imperio regit
Timent timores, mutat
in auctorem cædit,
Senec. ubi supra.

8.

4

ἡ δὲ τὴν περι-
ποιήσας πολυ-
τάτην, καὶ εἰς ὁ-
δὸν ἡ γυνὴ εἰ μὴ
μὴν τὸ ὁδοῦ
φρονήσας, πρὸς
ἀρετὴν δὲ καὶ
ἐν διαπολίαις α-
φρονῶν, πρὸς
πρὸς ἡ δὲ ἀνα-
μύα ἐκποδῶν
Χαρισία τὸ ἡ
δὲ φρονῶν δι-
κρῶν ἡ δὲ φρονῶν
συνάφῃς ὁδοῦ.
Hiero.

religion will deface the image CHRIST hath stamped upon it; certain it is, the mettall is much abated by so impure alloy, while the Christian Prince serves his end of ambition and bears arms upon his neighbours countrey for the service of religion, making CHRIST S kingdom to invade Herods rights: and in the state Ecclesiasticall secular interests have so deep a portion, that there are snares laid to tempt a persecution, and men are invited to Sacriledge while the revenues of a Church are a fair fortune for a Prince; I make no scruple to finde fault with Painters that picture the poor saints with rich garments; for though they deserved better, yet they had but poor ones: and some have been tempted to cheat the Saint, not out of ill will to his Sanctity, but love to his shrine, and to the Beauty of the clothes, with which some imprudent persons have of old time dressed their images: so it is in the state of the Church, persecution, and the robes of CHRIST were her portion, and her clothing, and when she is dressed up in gawdy fortunes it is no more then she deserves, but yet sometimes it is occasion that the Devil cheats her of her holiness, and the men of the world sacrilegiously cheat her of her riches: and then when GOD hath reduced her to that poverty he first promised and intended to her, the persecution ceases, and sanctity returns, and GOD curses the sacriledge, and stirs up mens mindes to religious Donatives: and all is well till the growes rich again. And if it be dangerous in any man to be rich, and discomposes his steps in his journey to Eternity, it is not then so proportionable to the analogy of CHRIST S Poverty, and the inheritance of the Church to be sedulous in acquiring great temporalities, and putting Princes in jealousy and states into care for securities, lest all the Temporall should run into Ecclesiasticall possession.

9.

If the Church have by the active piety of a credulous, a pious and lesse observant age been endowed with great possessions, she hath rules enough, and poor enough, and necessities enough to dispend what she hath, with advantages to religion: but then all she gets by it is the trouble of an unthankfull, a suspected and unsatisfying dispensation; and the Church is made by evil persons a Scene of ambition and stratagem, and to get a Germane Bishoprick is to be a Prince, and to defend with nicenesse and sues of Law every custom or lesser rite even to the breach of charity, and the scandall of religion is called a duty; and every single person is bound to forgive injuries, and to quit his right rather then his Charity, but if it is not a duty in the Church also, in them whose life should be excellent to the degree of example. I would fain know, if there be not greater care taken to secure the Ecclesiasticall revenue, then the publike charity and the honour of religion in the strict piety of the Clergy: for as the not engaging in suits may occasion bold people to wrong the Church, so the necessity of engaging is occasion of loosing charity and of great scandall. I finde not fault with a free revenue of the Church; it is in some sence necessary to Governours, and to preserve the Consequents of their authority: but I represent that such things are occasion of much mischief to the Church, and lesse holiness, and in all cases, respect should be had to the design of Christianity, to the Prophecies of JESUS, to the promised lot of the Church, to the dangers of riches, to the excellencies and advantages, and rewards of poverty; and if the Church have enough to perform all her duties and obligations cheerfully, let her of all societies be soonest content. If she have plenty

Vide quæ dixit
Arianus M. uel
lib. 17. & episto-
las S. Gregorii
m. l. 4. ep. 32.
34. 36. & l. 6
ep. 30. l. 7. indic-
t. ep. 30. & con-
cil. Africani
quo monitus e-
Castellinus papa,
ne summo in ty-
phum sæculi in
ecclesia quæ in
sem. h. p. i. citat,
& huius i. i. i. i.
e. i. i. i. i. i. i. i. i.
d. e. i. i. i. i. i. i. i.
p. e. i. i. i. i. i. i. i.
i. i. i. i. i. i. i. i.

plenty let her use it temperately and charitably, if she have not, let her not be querulous and troublesome; but however, it would be thought upon, that though in judging the *quantum* of the Churches portion the World thinks every thing too much; yet we must be careful we do not judge every thing too little; and if our fortune be safe between envy and contempt, it is much mercy. If it be despicable, it is safe for Ecclesiasticks, though it may be accidentally inconvenient, or lesse profitable to others; but if it be great, publick experience hath made remonstrance, that it mingles with the World, and duties those fingers which are instrumental in consecration, and the more solemn rites of Christianity.

JESUS fled from the persecution; as he did not stand it out, so he did not stand out against it; he was careful to transmit no precedent, or encouragement of resisting tyrannous Princes, when they offer violence to Religion, and our lives: he would not stand disputing for privileges, nor calling in Auxiliaries from the LORD of Hosts, who could have spared him many Legions of Angels, every single spirit being able to have defeated all *Herods* power; but he knew it was a hard lesson to learn patience, and all the excuses in the World would be sought out to discourage such a Doctrine by which we are taught to dye, or lose all we have, or suffer inconveniences at the will of a Tyrant, we need no authentick examples, much lesse Doctrines to invite Men to war, from which we see Christian Princes cannot be restrained with the engagements and peaceful Theoremes of an excellent and a holy Religion, nor Subjects kept from rebelling by the interests of all Religions in the World, nor by the necessities and reasonableness of obedience, nor the indeerments of all publick Societies of Men; one word, or an intimation from CHRIST would have founded an alarm, and put us into postures of defence, when all CHRISTs excellent Sermons, and rare exemplar actions cannot rye our hands. But it is strange now, that of all Men in the World Christians should be such fighting people, or that Christian Subjects should lift up a thought against a Christian Prince, when they had no intimation of encouragement from their Master, but many from him to endear obedience and humility, and patience, and charity, and these four make up the whole analogy, and represent the chief designe and meaning of Christianity in its moral constitution.

BUT JESUS, when himself was safe could also have secured the poor Babes of *Bethlehem*, with thousands of diversions and avocations of *Herods* purposes, or by discovering his own escape in some safe manner not unknown to the Divine Wisdom; but yet it did not so please GOD. He is Lord of his Creatures, and hath absolute dominion over our lives, and he had an end of glory to serve upon these Babes, and an end of justice upon *Herod*; and to the children he made such compensation, that they had no reason to complain that they were so soon made stars, when they shined in their little Orbs and participations of Eternity; for so the sense of the Church hath been, that they having died the death of Martyrs, though incapable of making the choice, GOD supplied the effects of their will, by his own entertainment of the thing; that as the misery and their death, so also their glorification might have the same Authour in the same manner of causality; even by a peremptory and unconditioned determination in these particulars. This sense is pious and nothing unreasonable, considering what all circumstances of the thing make the case particular; but the

innuature

10. 9

11.

Et sic necesse
est habilis ad
pugnandum idonea
exitio ad eum
nam; & ut ap-
pareat inno-
centes esse qui
propter Chris-
tum necantur,
innocentia inno-
centis oculis a. At.
s. cyrian.

immature death of other infants is a sadder story ; for though I have no warrant or thought that it is ill with them after death ; and in what manner or degree of well-being it is, there is no revelation ; yet I am not of opinion, that the securing of so low a condition as theirs in all reason is like to be, will make recompence, or is an equal blessing with the possibilities of such an eternity, as is proposed to them who in the use of reason and a holy life glorifie GOD with a free obedience ; and if it were otherwise, it were no blessing to live till the use of reason ; and Fools and Babes were in the best, because in the securest condition, and certain expectation of equal glories.

12.

As soon as *Herod* was dead (for the Divine Vengeance waited his own time for his arrest) the Angel presently brought *Joseph* word ; the holy Family was full of content and indifferency, not solicitous for return, not distrustful of the Divine Providence, full of poverty and sanctity, and content, waiting GODS time, at the return of which GOD delay'd not to recall them from exile ; out of *Egypt* he called his Son and directed *Josephs* fear and discourse that he should divert to a place in the jurisdiction of *Philip*, where, the Heir of *Herods* cruelty, *Archelaus*, had nothing to do ; and this very Series of providence and care GOD expresses to all his sons by adoption ; and will determine the time and set bounds to every Persecution, and punish the instruments, and ease our pains, and refresh our sorrows, and give quietnesse to our fears, and deliverance from our troubles, and sanctifie it all, and give a Crown at last, and all in his good time, if we wait the coming of the Angel, and in the mean time do our duty with care, and sustain our temporals with indifferency ; and in all our troubles and displeasing accidents we may call to minde, that GOD by his holy and most reasonable Providence hath so ordered it ; that the spiritual advantages we may receive from the holy use of such incommodities, are of great recompence and interest, and that in such accidents the holy JESUS having gone before us in precedent, does go along with us by love and imitation, and that makes the present condition infinitely more eligible, then the greatest splendour of secular fortune.



The PRAYER.

O Blessed and eternal GOD, who didst suffer thy holy Son to flye from the violence of an enraged Prince, and didst choose to defend him in the wayes of his infirmity by hiding himself, and a voluntary exile ; be thou a defence to all thy faithful people, when ever persecution arises against them. send them the ministry of Angels to direct them into wayes of security, and let thy holy Spirit guide them in the paths of sanctity ; and let thy providence continue in custody over their persons till the times of refreshment, and the day of redemption shall return : Give O LORD to thy whole Church sanctity and zeal, and the confidences of a holy faith, boldnesse of confession, humility, content, and resignation of spirit, generous contempt of the World, and unmingled desires of thy glory, and the edification of thy Elect, that no secular interests disturb her duty, or discompose her charity,

ty,

by, or depresse her hopes, or in any unequal degree possess her affections and pollute her spirit, but preserve her from the snares of the World, and the Devil, from the rapine and greedy desires of sacrilegious persons, and in all conditions whether of affluence or want she may still promote the interests of Religion: that when plenty is within her palaces, and peace in her walls, that condition may then be best for her; and when she is made as naked as JESUS in his passion, then poverty may be best for her, that in all estates she may glorify thee, and in all accidents and changes thou mayest sanctify and bless her, and at last bring her to the eternal riches and abundances of glory, where no persecution shall disturb her rest. Grant this for sweet JESUS's sake, who suffered exile and hard journeys and all the inconveniences of a friendless person, in a strange Province; to whom with thee and the eternal Spirit be glory for ever, and blessing in all generations of the World and for ever and ever. Amen.

Sect. 7.

*Of the younger yeers of JESUS, and his
disputation with the Doctors in
the Temple.*



From the return of this holy Family to Judea, and their habitation in Nazareth, till the blessed child JESUS was twelve yeers of age, we have nothing transmitted to us out of any authentic Record; but that they went to Jerusalem every yeer at the Feast of the Passover. And when JESUS was twelve yeers old, and was in the Holy City attending upon the Paschal Rites, and solemn Sacrifices of the Law, his Parents having fulfill'd their dayes of festivity, went homeward, supposing the Child had been in the Caravan among his friends, and so they erred for the space of a whole dayes journey; and when they sought him and found him not, they returned to Jerusalem full of fears and sorrow.

No fancy can imagine the doubts, the apprehensions, the possibilities of mischief, and the tremblings of heart which the holy Virgin Mother felt thronging about her fancy and understanding; but such a person who hath been tempted to the danger of a violent fear and transportation, by apprehension of the loss of a hope greater than a Miracle; her discourses with her self could have nothing of distrust, but much of sadness and wonder, and the indetermination of her thoughts was a trouble, great as the passion of her love; possibly an Angel might have carried him she knew not whither; or it may be the son of Herod had gotten the prey, which his cruel Father miss'd; or he was sick, or detained out of curiosity and wonder, or any thing but what was right, and by this time she was come to Jerusalem, and

and having spent three dayes in her sad and holy pursuit of her lost jewel despairing of the prosperous event of any humane diligence, as in all other cases she had accustomed, she made her addresse to GOD, and entring into the Temple to pray; GOD, that knew her desires, prevented her with the blessings of goodnesse, and there her sorrow was changed into joy and wonder; for there she found her holy Son sitting in the midst of the Doctors both hearing them and asking them questions.

3. And when they saw him they were amazed, and so were all that heard him, at his understanding and answers; beyond his education, beyond his experience, beyond his yeers, and even beyond the common spirits of the best Men, discoursing up to the height of a Prophet, with the cleernesse of an Angel, and the infallibility of inspiration; for here it was verified in the highest and most literal signification, that out of the mouths of babes GOD had ordained strength; but this was the strength of argument, and science of the highest mysteries of Religion and secret Philosophy.
4. Glad were the Parents of the Childe to finde him illustrated with a miracle, concerning which when he had given them such an account, which they understood not, but yet Mary laid up in her heart, as that this was part of his employment and his Fathers businesse, he returned with them to Nazareth, and was subject to his Parents; where he lived in all holinesse and humility, shewing great signes of wisdom, induring himself to all that beheld his conversation, did nothing lesse then might become the great expectation which his miraculous birth had created of him; for he increased in wisdom and stature, and favour with GOD and Man, still growing in proportion to his great beginnings to a miraculous excellency of grace, sweetness of demeanour, and excellency of understanding.
5. They that love to serve GOD in hard questions, use to dispute whether CHRIST did truly, or in appearance onely increase in wisdom. For being personally united to the Word, and being the eternal wisdom of the Father, it seem'd to them, that a plenitude of wisdom was as natural to the whole Person, as to the Divine Nature. But others, fixing their belief upon the words of the story which equally affirms CHRIST, as properly to have increased in favour with GOD, as with Man, in wisdom, as in stature, they apprehend no inconvenience in affirming it to belong to the verity of Humane Nature to have degrees of understanding as well as of other perfections: and although the humanity of CHRIST made up the same person with the Divinity, yet they think the Divinity still to be free, even in those communications which were imparted to his inferiour Nature, and the Godhead might as well suspend the emanation of all the treasures of Wisdom upon the Humanity for a time, as he did the Beatific Vision, which most certainly was not imparted in the interval of his sad and dolorous Passion; but whether it were truly or in appearance, in habit or in exercise of act, by increase of notion or experience, it is certain the promotions of the holy Childe were great, admirable, and as full of wonder as of sanctity, and sufficient to entertain the hopes and expectations of Israel with preparations and dispositions, as to satisfie their wonder for the present, so to accept him at the time of his publication, they having no reason to be scandalized at the smallnesse, improbability, and indifferency of his first beginnings.
6. But the holy Childe had also an employment, which he undertook in obedience

obedience to his supposed Father, for exercise and example of humility, and for the support of that holy Family which was dear in the eyes of GOD, but not very splendid by the opulency of a free and indulgent fortune. He wrought in the trade of a Carpenter, and when *Joseph* died, which hapned before the manifestation of JESUS unto Israel, he wrought alone, and was no more called the Carpenters son, but the Carpenter himself. *Is not this Carpenter, the son of Mary?* said his offended Countrymen. And in this condition the blessed JESUS did abide till he was thirty years old, for he that came to fulfil the Law, would not suffer one tittle of it to passe unaccomplished; for by the Law of the Nation, and custome of the Religion, no Priest was to officiate, or Prophet was to preach before he was thirty years of age. Mark 6.3.

Ad. Sect. 7.

*Considerations of the Disputation of JESUS
with the Doctors in the Temple.*

Ioseph and Mary being returned unto Nazareth were sedulous to enjoy the privileges of their Country, the opportunities of Religion, the publick addresse to GOD, in the rites of festivals, and solemnities of the Temple; they had been long grieved with the impurities and Idol rites, which they with sorrow had observed to be done in Egypt; and being deprived of the blessings of those holy societies and employments, they used to enjoy in Palestine, at their return came to the offices of their Religion with appetites of fire, and keen as the evening Wolf; and all the joyes, which they should have received in resperison and distinct emanations, if they had kept their Anniverfaries at Jerusalem, all that united they received in the duplication of their joyes at their return, and in the fulfilling themselves with the refection and holy viands of Religion. For so GOD uses to satisfie the longings of holy people, when a Persecution ha's shut up the beautiful gates of the Temple, or denied to them opportunities of acceffe, although GOD hears the prayers they make with their windows toward Jerusalem, with their hearts opened with desires of the publick communions, and sends them a Prophet with a private meal, as *Abakkuk* came to *Daniel*, yet he liss their hearts when the yeer of Jubilee returns, and the people sing, *In convertendo*, the song of joy for their redemption; for as of all sorrows the deprivations and eclipses of Religion are the saddest, and of the worst and most inconvenient consequence; so in proportion are the joyes of spiritual plenty and religious returns; the communion of Saints being like the Primitive Corban, a repository to feed all the needs of the Church, or like a Taper joyn'd to a Torch, it self is kindled and increases the others flame.

They said not to go to Jerusalem; for all those holy prayers and ravishtments

Mabet semper
privilegium in-
um ut sacratus
Mat quod publi-
ca lege celebra-
tur, quam quod
privata institu-
tione dependi-
tur. Leo de je-
jun. 7. mensis.
Idem. Serm. 4.
Publica prae-
renda sunt pri-
vatis, & tunc est
efficacior sancti-
orq; devotio
quando in ope-
ribus pietatis to-
tus Ecclesia u-
nus est animus,
& unus sensus.

Hebr. 10. 25.

ravishments of love, those excellent meditations and entercourses with GOD, their private readings and discourses were but entertainments and satisfaction of their necessities; they lived with them during their retirements; but it was a feast when they went to *Jerusalem*, and the freer and more indulgent refection of the Spirit; for in publick solemnities GOD opens his treasures, and pours out of his grace more abundantly; private Devotions, and secret offices of Religion, are like refreshing of a Garden with the distilling and petty drops of a Waterpot; but addressees to the Temple, and serving GOD in the publick communion of Saints is like rain from Heaven; where the offices are described by a publick spirit, heightened by the greater portions of assistance, and receive advantages by the adunations and symbols of Charity, and increment by their distinct tie to promises appropriate even to their assembling, and mutual support, by the piety of example, by the communication of counsels, by the awfulness of publick observation, and the engagements of holy customes. For Religion is a publick vertue, it is the ligature of souls and the great instrument of the conservation of bodies Politick, and is united in a common object, the GOD of all the World, and is manag'd by publick ministries, by Sacrifice, Adoration, and Prayer, in which with variety of circumstances indeed, but with infinite consent and union of designe, all the sorts of *Adam* are taught to worship GOD; and it is a publication of GODS honour, its very purpose being to declare to all the World, how great things GOD hath done for us, whether in publick Donatives, or private Missives; so that the very designe, temper and constitution of Religion is to be a publick addresse to GOD; and although GOD is present in Closets, and there also distils his blessings in small rain, yet to the societies of Religion and publication of worship, as we are invited by the great blessings and advantages of Communion, so also we are in some proportions more straightly limited by the analogy and exigence of the duty. It is a Persecution when we are forced from publick worshippings; no Man can hinder our private addressees to GOD, every Man can build a Chappel in his brest, and himself be the Priest, and his heart the Sacrifice, and every foot of glebe he treads on be the Altar, and this no Tyrant can prevent. If then there can be Persecution in the offices of Religion, it is the prohibition of publick profession and Communions, and therefore he that denies to himself the opportunities of publick rites and conventions is his own Persecutour.

But when JESUS was twelve yeers old, and his Parents had finished their offices, and return'd filled with the pleasures of Religion, they mis'd the Childe, and sought him amongst their kinred, but there they found him not; for whoever seeks JESUS must seek him in the offices of Religion, in the Temple, not amongst the engagements and pursuit of worldly interests; *I forget also mine own Fathers house*, said David, the Father of this holy Childe, and so must we, when we run in an enquiry after the son of David; but our relinquishing must not be a dereliction of duty, but of engagement; our affections toward kinred must alwayes be with charity, and according to the endearments of our relation, but without immersion, and such adherencies, that either contradict or lessen our duty towards GOD.

It was a sad effect of their pious journey to lose the joy of their Family and the hopes of all the World; but it often happens that after spiritual employments GOD seems to absent himself, and withdraw the sen-
sible

sible effects of his presence, that we may seek him with the same diligence and care and holy fears, the holy Virgin Mother sought the blessed JESUS. And it is a designe of great mercy in GOD to take off the light from the eyes of a holy person, that he may not be abused with complacencies and too confident opinions and reflections upon his fair performances. For we usually judge of the well or ill of our devotions, and services, by what we feel; and we think GOD rewards every thing in the present, and by proportion to our own expectations; and if we feel a present rejoicing of Spirit, all is well with us, the smock of the Sacrifice ascended right in a holy Cloud; but if we feel nothing of comfort, then we count it a prodigy and ominous, and we suspect our selves (and most commonly we have reason:) such irradiations of cheerfulness are alwayes welcome, but it is not alwayes anger that takes them away; the Cloud removed from before the camp of Israel, and stood before the host of *Pharaoh*, but this was a designe of ruine to the Egyptians, and of security to Israel; and if those bright Angels that go with us to direct our journeyes remove out of our sight and stand behinde us, it is not alwayes an argument that the anger of the LORD is gone out against us; but such decays of sense and clouds of spirit are excellent conservatours of humility, and restrain those intemperances and vainer thoughts which we are prompted to in the gayety of our spirits.

But we often give GOD cause to remove and for a while to absent himself, and his doing of it sometimes upon the just provocations of our demerits, makes us at other times with good reason to suspect our selves even in our best actions. But sometimes we are vain, or remisse, or pride invades us in the darknesse and incuriousnesse of our spirits, and we have a secreta sin which GOD would have us to enquire after; and when we suspect every thing, and condemn our selves with strictest and most angry sentence, then it may be, GOD will with a ray of light break through the cloud, if not, it is nothing the worse for us; for although the visible remonstrance and face of things in all the absences and withdrawals of JESUS be the same, yet if a sin be the cause of it, the withdrawing is a taking away his favour and his love; but if GOD does it to secure thy piety, and to enflame thy desires, or to prevent a crime, then he withdraws a gift onely, nothing of his love, and yet the darknesse of the spirit and sadnesse seem equal. It is hard in these cases to discover the cause, as it is nice to judge the condition of the effect, and therefore it is prudent to ascertain our condition by improving our care and our Religion; and in all accidents to make no judgement concerning GODS favour by what we feel, but by what we do.

When the holy Virgin with much Religion and sadnesse had sought her joy, at last she found him disposing among the Doctors, hearing them and asking them questions; and besides that he now first opened a fontinel, and there sprang out an excellent rivulet from his abyse of wisdom, he consign'd this truth to his Disciples, that they who mean to be Doctors and teach others, must in their first accesses and degrees of discipline learn of those, whom GOD and publick order hath set over us, in the mysteries of Religion.

The



The PRAYER.

Blessed and most holy JESUS, Fountain of grace and comfort, Treasure of wisdom and spiritual emanations, be pleased to abide with me for ever, by the inhabitation of thy interiour assistances and refreshments; and give me a corresponding love, acceptable and unstained purity, care and watchfulnesse over my wayes, that I may never, by provoking thee to anger, cause thee to remove thy dwelling, or draw a cloud before thy holy face; but if thou art pleased upon a designe of charity, or trial, to cover my eyes, that I may not behold the bright rayes of thy favour, nor be refreshed with spirituall comforts; let thy love support my spirit, by wayes insensible, and in all my needs give me such a portion, as may be instrumentall and incentive to performance of my duty; and in all accidents let me continue to seek thee by prayers and humiliation, and frequent desires, and the stritnesse of a holy life; that I may follow thy example, pursue thy footsteps, be supported by thy strength, guided by thy hand, enlightened by thy favour, and may at last after a persevering holinesse and an unwearied industry dwell with thee in the Regions of light, and eternal glory, where there shall be no feares of parting from the habitations of felicity and the union and fruition of thy presence, O blessed and most holy JESUS. Amen.

Sect.

Sect. 8.

Of the preaching of JOHN the Baptist, preparative to the manifestation of JESUS.

When Herod had drunk so great a draught of blood at *Bethlehem*, and sought for more from the hill countrey, *Elizabeth* carried her son into the *Wildernesse*, there in the desert places and recesses to hide him from the fury of that beast, where she attended him with as much care and tenderneſſe, as the affections and fears of a Mother could expreſſe in the permission of thoſe fruitleſſe ſolitudes; the childe was about eighteen moneths old, when he firſt fled to ſanctuary, but after ſourty dayes his Mother died, and his Father *Zechary* at the time of his miniſtration, which happened about this time, was killed in the court of the Temple; ſo that the childe was expoſed to all the dangers and infelicities of an Orphan, in a place of ſolitarineſſe and diſcomfort, in a time when a bloody King endeavoured for his deſtruction: But when his Father and Mother were taken from him, the Lord took him up. For according to the tradition of the Greeks, GOD deputed an Angel to be his nourisher and Guardian, as he had formerly done to *Iſhmael* who dwelt in the wilderneſſe, and to *Elias* when he fled from the rage of *Ahab*: So to this childe, who came in the ſpirit of *Elias*, to make demonſtration, that there can be no want where GOD undertakes the care and proviſion.

The entertainment, that *S. Johns* Proveditor the Angel gave him, was ſuch as the *Wilderneſſe* did aſſoord, and ſuch as might diſpoſe him to a life of aſterity; for there he continued ſpending his time in meditations, contemplation, prayer, affections and colloquies with GOD, eating Flies and wilde honey, not clothed in ſoft, but a hairy garment, and a leathern girdle, till he was thirty yeers of age. And then, being the fifteenth yeer of *Tiberius*, *Pontius Pilate* being Governour of *Judea*, the Word of GOD came unto *John* in the *wilderneſſe*. And he came into all the countrey about *Jordan*, preaching and baptizing.

This *John* according to the propheſies of him, and designation of his perſon by the holy Ghoſt, was the forerunner of CHRIST, ſent to diſpoſe the people for his entertainment, and prepare his wayes, and therefore it was neceſſary his perſon ſhould be ſo extraordinary, and full of ſanctity, and ſo clarified by great concurrencies and wonder in the circumſtances of his life, as might gain credit and reputation to the teſtimony he was to give concerning his LORD the Saviour of the World. And ſo it happened.

H

For

Niceph. lib. 1. c. 14.

S. Chrys. homil. de nativ. S. Jo. Baptiſta. Gen. 21. 17. 1 Kings 19. 5.

Vestis erat curvi ſectis contra cameli Contra luxuriam molles duraret ut arctus Arceretur graves compuncto corpore ſuavos. Paul. nat.

3.

4

For as the *Baptist*, while he was in the wilderness, became the pattern of solitary and contemplative life, a School of Virtue, and Example of Sanctity, and singular austerity: so at his emigration from the places of his retirement, he seemed, what indeed he was, a rare and excellent Personage; and the wonders which were great at his birth, the prediction of his Conception by an Angel, which never had before happened, but in the persons of *Isaac* and *Samson*; the contempt of the World, which he bore about him, his mortified countenance and deportment, his austere and heremital life, his vehement spirit and excellent zeal in preaching, created so great opinions of him among the people, that all held him for a Prophet in his office, for a heavenly person in his own particular, and a rare example of sanctity, and holy life to all others; and all this being made solemn and ceremonious by his baptism he prevail'd so, that he made excellent and apt preparations for the LORDS appearing; *For there went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the regions round about Jordan, and were baptized of him confessing their sins.*

The *Baptist* having by so heavenly means won upon the affections of all Men, his Sermons and his testimony concerning CHRIST were the more likely to be prevalent, and accepted; and the sum of them, was repentance and dereliction of sins, and bringing forth the fruits of good life, in the promoting of which Doctrine he was a severe reprehender of the Pharisees, and Sadducees, he exhorted the people to works of mercy, the Publicans to do justice, and to decline oppression, the Souldiers to abstain from plundering, and doing violence or rapine; and publishing, that *he was not the Christ*, that *he onely baptized with water*, but the *Messias* should baptize with the holy Ghost, and with fire; he finally denounced judgement, and great severities to all the World of impenitents, even abscession and fire unquenchable. And from this time forward, viz. *From the dayes of John the Baptist, the kingdom of heaven suffered violence, and the violent take it by force.* For now the Gospel began to dawn, and *John* was like the morning star, or the blusings springing from the windows of the East, foretelling the approach of the Sun of Righteousnesse: and as *S. John Baptist* laid the first rough, hard and unhewn stone of this building in mortification, self-denial, and doing violence to our natural affections: So it was continued by the Master builder himself, who propounded the glories of the Crown of the heavenly Kingdom to them only who should climbe the Crosse to reach it.

Ad.

Ad. Sect. 8.

*Considerations of the preaching of JOHN
the Baptist.*

From the disputation of JESUS with the Doctors to the time of his manifestation to Israel, which was eighteen yeers, the holy Childe dwelt in *Nazareth* in great obedience to his Parents, in exemplar modesty, singular humility, working with his hands in his supposed Fathers trade, for the support of his own and his Mothers necessities, and that he might bear the curse of *Adam*, that in the sweat of his brows he should eat his bread, all the while he increased in favour with GOD and Man, sending forth excellent testimonies of a rare Spirit, and a wise understanding in the temperate instances of such a conversation to which his humility and great obedience had engaged him: But all this while the stream ran under ground, and though little bubblings were discern'd in all the course, and all the way Men looked upon him as upon an excellent person, diligent in his calling, wise and humble, temperate and just, pious and rarely temper'd, yet at the manifestation of *John* the Baptist, he brake forth like the fire from the bowels of the earth, or the Sun from a cloud; and gave us precedent that we should not shew our lights to minister to vanity, but then onely when GOD and publick order, and just dispositions of Men call for a manifestation; and yet the ages of Men have been so forward in propheticall ministeries, and to undertake Ecclesiastical imployment, that the vitiousnesse, and indiscretions, and scandals the Church of GOD feels as great burdens upon the tendernes of her spirit, are in great part owing to the neglect of this instance of the prudence and modesty of the holy JESUS.

But now the time appointed was come, the *Baptist* comes forth upon the Theatre of *Palestine*, a fore-runner of the office and publication of JESUS, and by the great reputation of his sanctity, prevailed upon the affections and judgement of the People, who with much ease believed his Doctrine, when they had reason to approve his life; for the good example of the Preacher is alwayes the most prevailing Homily; his life is his best Sermon. He that will raise affections in his Auditory must affect their eyes; for we seldom see the people weep if the Oratour laughs loud and loosely; and there is no reason to think that his discourse should work more with me, then himself. If his arguments be fair and specious, I shall think them fallacies, while they have not faith with him; and what necessary for me to be temperate, when he, that tels me so, sees no such need but hopes to go to Heaven without it; or if the duty be necessary, I shall learn the definition of temperance and the latitudes of my permission, and the bounds of lawful and unlawful by the exposition of his practise; if he bindes a burden upon my shoulders, it is but reason I should look him to bear his portion too.

S. Chrys. orat
de S. Babylâ.

Good works convince more then miracles, and the power of ejecting Devils is not so great probation, that Christian religion came from God, as is the holiness of the doctrine, and its efficacy and productions upon the hearty Professours of the institution. S. Pachomius, when he wore the military girdle under Constantine the Emperour, came to a city of Christians, who having heard that the army in which he then marched was almost starved for want of necessary provisions, of their own charity relieved them speedily and freely; he wondering at their so free and cheerfull dispensation, inquired what kind of people these were, whom he saw so bountifull? It was answered they were Christians, whose Profession it is to hurt no man, and to do good to every man; the pleased Souldier was convinced of the excellency of that religion, which brought forth men so good and so pious, and loved the Mother for the childrens sake, threw away his girdle and became Christian, and religious, and a Saint: And it was Tertullians great argument in behalf of Christians, *see how they love one another, how every Man is ready to die for his brother*, it was a living argument and a sensible demonstration of the purity of the fountain, from whence such lympid waters did derive. But so John the Baptist made himself a fit instrument of preparation, and so must all the Christian Clergy be fitted for the dissemination of the Gospel of Jesus.

The Baptist had till this time, that is, about thirty yeers, lived in the Wildernesse under the Discipline of the holy Ghost, under the tuition of Angels, in conversation with GOD, in great mortification and disaffections to the World, his garments rugged and uncase, his meat plain, necessary, and without variety, his imployment prayers and devotion, his company wilde beasts in ordinary, in extraordinary, messengers from Heaven; and all this not undertaken of necessity to subdue a bold lust, or to punish a loud crime, but to become more holy and pure from the lesser stains and insinuations of too free infirmities, and to prepare himself for the great ministry of serving the holy JESUS in his publication. Thirty yeers he lived in great austerity; and it was a rare patience and exemplar mortification; we use not to be so pertinacious in any pious resolutions, but our purposes disband upon the sense of the first violence; we are free and confident of resolving to fast when our bellies are full, * but when we are called upon by the first necessities of nature, our zeal is cool, and dissoluble into air upon the first temptation; and we are not upheld in the violences of a short austerity without faintings and repentances to be repented of, and enquirings *after the vow is past*, and searching for excuses and desires to reconcile our nature and our conscience; unlesse our necessity be great, and our sin clamorous and our Conscience loaden, and no peace to be had without it; and it is well if upon any reasonable grounds we can be brought to suffer contradictions of nature, for the advantages of grace; but it would be remembered that the Baptist did more upon a lesse necessity, and possibly the greatness of the example may entice us on a little further, then the customes of the World or our own indevotions would engage us.

But after the expiration of a definite time John came forth from his solitude, and served GOD in societies; he served GOD, and the content of his own spirit by his conversing with Angels and Dialogues with GOD, so long as he was in the wildernesse, and it might be some trouble

* Sarcinis & ex-
pletis jugandus
est carere quan-
tius Cicer de le-
met.

to him to mingle with the impurities of Men, amongst whom he was sure to observe such recesses from perfection, such violation of all things sacred, so great despatch done to all ministeries of Religion, that to him who had no experience or neighbourhood of actions criminal, it must needs be to his sublim'd and clarified spirit more punitive and afflictive, then his hairen shirt and his asectick diet was to his body; but now himself, that tried both, was best able to judge which state of life was of greatest advantage and perfection.

In his solitude he did breathe more pure inspiration, Heaven was more open, GOD was more familiar, and frequent in his visitations; In the Wildernesse his company was Angels, his imployment meditations and prayer; his temptations simple and from within, from the impotent and lesser rebellions of a mortified body; his occasions of sin as few as his examples; his condition such, that if his soul were at all busie, his life could not easily be other then the life of Angels; for his work and recreation, and his visits, and his retirements could be nothing but the variety and differing circumstances of his piety; his inclinations to society made it necessary for him to repeat his addressees to GOD; for his being a sociable Creature, and yet in solitude, made that his conversing with GOD, and being partaker of Divine communications should be the satisfaction of his natural desires, and the supply of his singularity and retirement; the discomforts of which made it natural for him to seek out for some refreshment, and therefore to go to Heaven for it, he having rejected the solaces of the World already; and all this besides the innocencies of his silence, which is very great, and to be judged of in proportion to the infinite extravagancies of our language, there being no greater perfection here to be expected, then not to offend in our tongue. 'It was solitude and retirement in which JESUS kept his Vigils, the Desert places heard him pray, in a privacy he was born, in the Wildernesse he fed his thousands, upon a Mountain apart he was transfigured, upon a Mountain he died, and from a Mountain he ascended to his Father; in which retirements his Devotion certainly did receive the advantage of convenient circumstances, and himself in such dispositions twice had the opportunities of glory.

And yet after all these excellencies, the Spirit of GOD called the Baptist forth to a more excellent ministry; for in solitude pious persons might go to Heaven by the way of prayers and devotion; but in society they might go to Heaven by the way of mercy and charity, and dispensations to others. In solitude there are fewer occasions of vices, but there is also the exercise of fewer vertues; and the temptations, though they be not from many Objects, yet are in some Circumstances more dangerous, not onely because the worst of evils, spiritual pride does seldom miss to creep upon those goodly Oakes, like ivy, and suck their heart out, and a great mortifier without some complacencies in himself, or affectations or opinions, or something of singularity, is almost as unusual, as Virgin purity and unstained thoughts in the Bordelli: (Saint Hierome had tried it and found it so by experience, and he it was that said so) but also because whatsoever temptation does invade such retired persons, they have privacies enough to act it in, and no eyes upon them but the eye of Heaven; no shame to encounter withal, no fears of being discovered, and

5.
In solitude aer
purior, celum
apertius, famili-
arior Deus.
Origen.

James 5.

Petrus Cellensis,
l. 4. ep. 12.

In solitude ci-
to obrepit in-
purbia ep. 4.

Maxima pars peccata
 rationis in se habet
 quodammodo in se
 Secunda.
 S. Bernard. Malum
 quod non videtur
 non arguitur, et si non
 si necesse est arguitur
 Secunda. S. Bernard.
 ratio, in se habet
 peccatum in se habet

Eu. Ab. H. A. B. 6. c. 3.
 Theod. 1. 4. c. 23. 24.

• Nihil est illi prin-
 cipi Deo qui omni-
 bus hunc mundum regit,
 quod quidem in ter-
 ris sit, acceptum
 quam consilia exor-
 hominum iure socia-
 li, quae civitates ap-
 pellantur, Ciceronem
 Scipionem.

7.

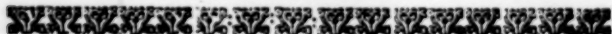
2.

we know by experience, that a *winnesse* of our conversation is a great re-
 straint to the inordination of our actions; Men seek out darknesse and se-
 crecies to commit a sin; and the evil that no Man sees, no Man reproves, and
 that makes the temptation bold and confident, and the iniquity easie and ready: So
 that as they have not so many tempters as they have abroad, so neither
 have they so many restraints; their vices are not so many, but they are
 more dangerous in themselves, and to the World safe and opportune; and
 as they communicate lesse with the World, so they do lesse charity and
 fewer offices of mercy; no Sermons there but when solitude is made popu-
 lar, and the City removes into the Wildernesse; no comforts of a publick
 Religion, or visible remonstrances of the Communion of Saints; and of
 the seven kinds of spiritual mercy, *onely one* can there properly be exerci-
 sed, and of the corporal *none* at all: And this is true in lives and instituti-
 ons of lesse retirement, in proportion to the degree of the solitude; and
 therefore Church history reports of diverse very holy persons, who left their
 wildernesess, and sweetnesse of Devotion in their retirement to serve
 GOD in publicke by the wayes of charity and exterior offices. Thus
 S. Anthony and Acepstas came forth to encourage the fainting people to
 contend to death for the crown of Martyrdom, and Aphraates in the time of
 Valens the Arrian Emperour came abroad to assist the Church in the sup-
 pressing the flames kindled by the Arrian Faction. And upon this ground
 they that are the greatest admirers of Herenitcal life, call the Episcopal
 Function *the state of perfection*, and a degree of ministerial and honorary
 excellency beyond the pieties and contemplations of solitude, because of
 the advantages of gaining souls, and religious conversation, and going to
 GOD by doing good to others.

John the Baptist united both these lives, and our blessed SAVIOUR
 who is the great precedent of sanctity and prudence, hath determined this
 question in his own instance; for he lived a life common, sociable, humane,
 charitable, and publick, and yet for the opportunities of especial devotion
 retir'd to prayer and contemplation, but came forth speedily; for the De-
 vil never set upon him, but in the Wildernesse, and by the advantage of
 retirement. For as GOD hath many, so the Devil hath some opportunities
 of doing his work in our solitarinesse; but JESUS reconcil'd both, and so
 did John the Baptist in several degrees and manners, and from both we
 are taught, that solitude is a good Schoole, and the World is the best Theatre,
 the institution is best there, but the practice here, the Wildernesse hath the
 advantage of Discipline and the society * opportunities of perfection. Pri-
 vacy is the best for devotion, and the publick for charity. In both GOD
 hath many Saints and Servants, and from both the Devil hath had some.

His Sermon was an exhortation to repentance, and an holy life, he gave
 particular schedules of duty to several states of persons, sharply reproved
 the Pharisees, for their hypocritie and impiety, it being worse in them be-
 cause contrary to their rule, their profession and institution: gently guided
 others into the wayes of righteousness, calling them *the straight wayes of*
the Lord, that is, the direct and shortest way to the Kingdom, for of all lines
 the straight is the shortest, and as every angle is a turning out of the way,
 so every sin is an obliquity, and interrupts the journey. By such discourses
 and a Baptism, he disposed the spirits of Men for the entertaining the Mes-
 ses, and the Homilies of the Gospel. For Johns Doctrine was to the Ser-
 mons

holding the secrets of his kingdom, and at all other times walking in the courts of the LORDS house, by the diligences and labours of repentance, and a holy life, till thou shalt please to call me to a neerer communication of thy excellencies, which then grant, when by thy gracious assistances, I shall have done thy works, & glorified thy holy Name, by the strict and never failing purposes and proportionable endeavours of Religion and holiness, through the merits and mercies of Jesus Christ. Amen.



Discourse 4.

Of Mortification and corporal austerities.

From the dayes of John the Baptist, the kingdom of Heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force, said our blessed SAVIOUR. For now that the new Covenant was to be made with Man, repentance which is so great a part of it, being in very many actions a punitive duty, afflictive and vindicative, from the dayes of the Baptist, (who first, by office and solemnity of designe, published this Doctrine) violence was done to the inclinations and dispositions of Man, and by such violence we were to be possessed of the Kingdom. And his example was the best Commentary upon his Text, he did violence to himself, he lived a life in which the rudenesses of Camels hair, and the lowest nutriment of Flies, and Honey of the Desert, his life of singularity, his retirement from the sweetnesses of society, his resisting the greatest of tentations, and despising to assume false honours, were instances of that violence, and explications of the Doctrine of Self-denial and Mortification, which are the Pedestal of the Crosse, and the Supporters of Christianity, as it distinguishes from all Lawes, Religions, and Institutions of the World.

2. Mortification is the one half of Christianity: it is a dying to the World, it is a denying of the will and all its natural desires: *an abstinence from pleasure and sensual complacencies, that the flesh being subdued to the spirit, both may joyn in the service of GOD, and in the offices of holy Religion.* It consists in actions of severity and renunciation, it refuses to give entertainment to any vanity, nor uses a freer licence in things lawful, lest it be tempted to things unlawful, it kills the lusts of the flesh by taking away its fuel, and incentives; and by using to contradict its appetite, does inure it with more facility to obey the superiour faculties; and in effect it is nothing but a great care we fin not, and a prudent and severe using such remedies and instruments which in Nature and Grace are made apt for the production of our purposes. And it consists in interiour and exterior offices; these being but instruments of the interiour, as the body is organical or instrumental to the soul, and no part of the duty it self, but as they are advantages to the end, the mortification of the Spirit; which by whatsoever means we have once acquired, and do continue, we are disoblig'd from all other exterior severities, unlesse by accident they come to be obligatory, and from some other cause.

3. Mortification of the will or the spirit of Man, that's the duty; that the will of Man may humbly obey GOD, and absolutely rule its inferiour faculties; that the inordinations of our natural desires, begun by Adams sinne, and continued and increased by our continuing evil customes may;

may be again placed in the right order, that since many of the Divine precepts are restraints upon our naturall desires we should so deny those appetites, that covet after naturall satisfactions, that they may not serve themselves by dis-serving God. For therefore our own wills are our greatest dangers, and our greatest enemies, because they tend to courses contradictory to God. God commands us to be humble; our own desires are to be great, considerable, and high; and we are never secure enough from contempt, unlesse we can place our neighbours at our feet; here therefore we must deny our will, and appetites of greatnesse for the purchase of humility. GOD commands Temperance and Chastity; our desires and naturall promptnesse breaks the bonds asunder, and entertaines dissolutions to the licentiousnesse of *Apicius*, or the wantonnesse of a Mahumetan Paradise; sacrificing meat and drink offerings to our appetites as if our stomachs were the Temples of *Bel*; and making women and the opportunities of lust to be our dwelling, and our employment, even beyond the common loosenesses of entertainment. Here therefore we must deny our own wills, our appetites of gluttony and Drunkennesse, and our purient beastly inclinations, for the purchase of temperance and chastity. And every other vertue is, either directly or by accident, a certain instance of this great duty, which is, like a Catholicon, purgative of all distemperatures, and is the best preparative and disposition to prayer in the world.

For it is a sad consideration, and of secret reason, that since prayer of all duties is certainly the sweetest and the easiest, it having in it no difficulty or vexatious labour; no wearinesse of bones, no dimmesse of eyes, or hollow cheeks is directly consequent to it, no naturall desires of contradictory quality, nothing of disease, but much of comfort & more of hope in it yet we are infinitely averse from it, weary of its length, glad of an occasion to pretermitt our offices, and yet there is no visible cause of such indisposition; nothing in the nature of the thing, nor in the circumstances necessarily appendant to the duty. Something is amiss in us and it wanted a name till the spirit of GOD by enjoining us the duty of mortification, hath taught us to know that immortification of spirit is the cause of all our secret and spirital indispositions: we are so incorporated to the desires of *sensuall* objects, that we feel no relish or gust of the *spirituall*. It is as if a Lyon should eat hay, or an Ox venison, there is no proportion between the object and the appetite, till by mortification of our first desires, our wills are made spirituall, and our apprehensions supernatural and clarified. For as a Cook told *Dionysius* the Tyrant, the black broth of *Lacedamon* would not do well at *Syracusa*, unlesse it be tasted by a Spartans palate; so neither can the excellencies of heaven be discerned, but by a spirit disrelishing the sortish appetites of the world, and accustomed to diviner banquets: and this was mystically signified by the two altars in *Solomons* temple, in the outer court whereof beasts were sacrificed, in the inner court an altar of incense: the first representing Mortification or slaying of our beastly appetites; the second the offering up our prayers, which are not likely to become a pleasant offertory, unlesse our impurities be removed by the atonement made by the first Sacrifices; without our spirit be mortified, we neither can love to pray, nor GOD love to hear us.

But there are three steps to ascend to this altar. 1. The first is to abstain from satisfying our carnall desires in the instances of sinne; and although the furnace flames with vehement emissions at some times, yet

to walk in the midst of the burning without being consumed, like the children of the Captivity; that is the duty even of the most imperfect, and is commonly the condition of those good persons, whose interest in secular employments speaks fair, and solicits often, and tempts highly; yet they manage their affairs with habitually justice, and a constant charity; and are temperate in their daily meals, chaste in the solaces of marriage, and pure in their spirits, unmingled with sordid affections in the midst of their possessions and enjoyments. These men are in the world, but they are strangers

Hebr. 11. 13.

1. Tim. 6. 8.

2. Cor. 5. 6.

here; *They have a city, but not an abiding one; they are Proselytes of the house,* but have made no covenant with the world. For though they desire with secular desires, yet it is but for necessities, and then they are content; they use the creatures with freedom, and modesty; but never to intemperance and transgression: so that their hands are below tyed there by the necessities of their life; but their hearts are above, lifted up by the abstractions of this first degree of mortification. And this is the first and nicest distinction between a man of the world, and a man of GOD; for this state is a denying our affections nothing but the sin; it enjoys as much of the world, as may be consistent with the possibilities of heaven: a little lesse then this is the state of immortification, and a *being in the flesh*, which (saith the Apostle) cannot inherit the kingdom of GOD. The flesh must first be separated, and the adherencies pared off from the skin, before the parchment be fit to make a schedule for use, or to transmit a record; whatsoever in the sense of the Scripture is *flesh*, or an enemy to the spirit, if it be not rescinded and mortified, makes that the laws of GOD cannot be written in our hearts. This is the doctrine St. Paul taught the Church. *For if ye live after the flesh ye shall die, but if ye through the spirit do mortifie the deeds of the body, ye shall live.* This first mortification is the way of life, if it continues: but its continuance is not secured, till we are advanced towards life by one degree more of this death. For this condition is a state of a daily, and dangerous warfare, and many inroads are made by sin, and many times hurt is done and booty carried off for he that is but thus far mortified, although his dwelling be within the kingdom of grace, yet it is in the borders of it, and hath a dangerous neighbourhood. If we mean to be safe, we must remove into the heart of the Land, or carry the war further off.

6.

● *quam contemptares est homo, nisi superhumane exerceat.* Senec.

2. We must not onely be strangers here, but we must be dead too, *dead unto the world*, that is, we must not onely deny our *vices*, but our *Passions*; not only contradict the direct immediate *persuasion* to a sin, but also crosse the *inclination* to it. So long as our appetites are high and full, we shall never have peace or safety, but the dangers and insecurities of a full war, and a potent Enemy, we are alwayes disputing the Question, ever struggling for life: but when our Passions are killed, when our desires are little and low, then grace reigns, then *our life is hid with Christ in God*. then we have fewer interruptions in the way of righteousness, then we are not so apt to be surprized by suddain eruptions and transportation of Passions, and our piety it self is more prudent and reasonable, chosen with a freer election, discerned with clearer understanding, hath more in it of judgement then of Fancie, and is more spirituall and Angelicall. He that is apt to be angry, though he be habitually carefull, and full of observation, that he sin not, may at some time or other be surprized, when his guards are undiligent, and without actuall expectation of an enemy: but if his anger be

be dead in him, and the inclination lessened to the indifferency and gentleness of a Child, the man dwells safe, because of the impotency of his Enemy or that he is reduced to obedience, or hath taken conditions of peace. He that hath refused to consent to actions of uncleanness to which he was strongly tempted, hath won a victory by fine force, GOD hath blessed him well; but an opportunity may betray him instantly, and the sin may be in upon him unawares; unless also his desires be killed; he is betrayed by a party within. David was a holy person, but he was surprised by the sight of *Bathsheba*, for his freer use of permitted beds had kept the fire alive, which was apt to be put into a flame when so fair a beauty reflected through his eyes. But *Joseph* was a Virgin, and had kept under all his inclinations to looser thoughts; opportunity, and command and violence, and beauty did make no breach upon his spirit.

He, that is in the first state of Pilgrimage, does not mutiny against his Superiours, nor publish their faults, nor envie their dignities; but he that is dead to the world, sees no fault that they have, and when he hears an objection, he buries it in an excuse, and rejoices in the dignity of their persons. Every degree of mortification endures reproof without murmur; but he that is quite dead to the world and to his own will, feels no regret against it, and hath no secret thoughts of trouble and unwillingness to the suffering, save onely that he is sorry he deserved it. For so a dead body resists not your violence, changes not its posture you plac'd it in, strikes not his striker, is not moved by your words, nor provoked by your scorn, nor is troubled when you shrink with horror at the sight of it; onely it will hold the head downward in all its situations, unless it be hindered by violence: and a mortified spirit is such, without indignation against scorn, without revenge against injuries, without murmuring at low offices, not impatient in troubles, indifferent in all accidents, neither transported with joy, nor deprest with sorrow, and is humble in all his thoughts. And thus *he that is dead* (saith the Apostle) *is justified from sinners.* And this is properly a *state of life*, in which by the grace of JESUS we are restored to a condition of order and interior beauty in our faculties, our actions are made moderate and humane, our spirits are even, and our understandings undisturbed.

For passions of the sensitive soule are like an exhalation, hot and dry, borne up from the earth upon the wings of a cloud, and detain'd by violence out of its place, causing thunders, and making eruptions into lightning and sudden fires. There is a tempest in the soule of a passionate man, and though every wind does not shake the earth, nor rend trees up by the roots, yet we call it violent, and ill weather, if it onely makes a noise and is harmlesse. And it is an inordination in the spirit of a man when his passions are tumultuous and mighty, though they do not determine directly upon a sin, they discompose his peace, and disturb his spirit, and make it like troubled waters, in which no man can see his own figure, and just proportions; and therefore by being lesse a man, cannot be so much a Christian, in the midst of so great indispositions. For although the cause may hallow the passion (and if a man be very angry for Gods cause it is zeale, not fury) yet the cause cannot secure the person from violence, transportation and inconvenience. When *Elisha* was consulted by three kings concerning the successe of their present expedition, he grew so angry against idola-

7.

Rom. 6. 7.

8.

2 King. 3. 13.

idolatrous *Foram*, and was carried on to so great degrees of disturbance, that when for *Jehoshaphats* sake he was content to enquire of the LORD, he called for a minstrell, who by his harmony might recompose his disunited and troubled spirit, that so he might be apter for divination, And sometimes this zeal goes besides the intention of the man, and beyond the degrees of prudent or lawfull, and engages in a sin, though at first it was zeal for religion. For so it hapned in *Moses*, at the waters of *Massah* and *Meribah*, he spake foolishly, and yet it was when he was zealous for GOD and extremely careful for the peoples interest. For his passion he was hindered from entering into the land of promise. And we also if we be not moderate and well tempered, even in our passions for GOD, may, like *Moses*, break the tables of the Law, and throw them out of our hands with zeal to have them preserved; for passion violently snatches at the conclusion, but is inconsiderate and incurious concerning the premises. The sum and purpose of this Discourse is that saying of our blessed Saviour, *He that will be my Disciple, must deny himself*, that is, not onely desires that are sinfull, but desires, that are his own, pursuances of his own affections, and violent motions, though to things not evil, or in themselves contagious.

Math. 16. 24.

9.

3. And yet there is a degree of mortification of spirit beyond this, for the condition of our security may require, that we not onely deny to act our tentations, or to please our naturall desires, but also to seek opportunities of doing displeasure to our affections, and violence to our inclinations; and not onely to be indifferent, but to choose a contradiction and a denyall to our strongest appetites, to rejoyce in a trouble: and this was the spirit of *S. Paul*, *I am exceeding joyfull in all our tribulations, and we glory in it*: which joy consisteth not in any sensitive pleasure any man can take in afflictions and adverse accidents, but in a despising the present inconveniences, and looking through the cloud unto those great felicities, and graces, and consignations to glory, which are the effects of the Crosse. Knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed; That was the incentive of *S. Pauls* joy; and therefore as it may consist with any degree of mortification to pray for the taking away of the Crosse, upon condition it may consist with Gods glory, and our ghostly profit; so it is properly an act of this vertue to pray for the Crosse, or to meet it, if we understand it may be for the interest of the spirit. And thus *S. Basil* prayed to God to remove his violent pains of headach; but when God heard him, and took away his paine, and lust came in the place of it, he prayed to God to restore him his headach againe; that crosse was gaine and joy, when the removall of it was so full of danger and temptation: and this the Masters of spirituall life call *being crucified with Christ*; because as CHRIST chose the death, and desired it by the appetites of the spirit, though his flesh smarted under it, and groaned and dyed with the burden; so doe all that are thus mortified, they place misfortunes and sadneses amongst things eligible, and set them before the eyes of their desire: although the flesh, and the desires of sense are factious and bold against such sufferings.

2. Cor. 7. 4.

Rom. 5. 3.

Ibid.

10.

Of these three degrees of interiour or spirituall mortification; the first, is duty; the second is counsell, and the third is perfection; We sinne, if we have not the first; we are in danger without the second, but without the third we cannot be perfect, as our heavenly Father is, but shall have more of human infirmities to be ashamed of, then can be excused by the accrefencies and

con-

condition of our nature ; the first is onely of absolute necessity ; the second is prudent, and of greatest convenience : but the third is excellent and perfect. And it was the consideration of a wise Man, that the saints in heaven, who understand the excellent glories and vast differences of state, and capacities amongst beatified persons, although they have no envy nor sorrows, yet if they were upon earth with the same notion and apprehensions they have in heaven, would not for all the world loose any degree of glory ; but mortifie to the greatest eminency ; that their glory may be a derivation of the greatest ray of light ; every degree being of compensation glorious, and disproportionably beyond the inconsiderable troubles of the greatest self denyall. GODS purpose is, that we abstain from sin ; there is no more in the commandment ; and therefore we must deny our selves, so as not to admit a sin, under pain of a certain and eternall curse ; but the other degrees of mortification are by accident so many degrees of vertue ; not being enjoyed or counselled for themselves, but for the preventing of crimes, and for securities of good life ; and therefore are parts and offices of Christian prudence, which, whosoever shall positively reject, is neither much in love with vertue, nor carefull of his own safety.

Tanta u gloriam omni hora negligimus, quanta bona interim facere possumus, si otiose eam transigimus.

2. But Mortification hath also some designs upon the body. For the body is the shop, and forge of the soul, in which all her designs which are transient upon externall objects, are framed ; and it is a good servant, as long as it is kept in obedience, and under discipline, but he that breeds his servant delicately, will finde him contumacious and troublesome, bold and confident, as his son ; and therefore S. Pauls practise, (as himself gives account of it) was to keep his body under, and bring it into subjection, lest he should become a Castaway ; for the desires of the body are in the same things, in which themselves are satisfied, so many injuries to the soul ; because upon every one of the appetites a restraint is made, and a law placed for sentinell, that if we transgresse the bounds fixt by the divine Commandment, it becomes a sinne : now it is hard for us to keep them within compasse, because they are little more then agents meerly naturall, and therefore cannot interrupt their act, but cover and desire as much as they can without suspension or coercion, but what comes from without, which is therefore the more troublesome ; because all such restraints are against nature, and without sensuall pleasure. And therefore this is that, that S. Paul said, when we were in the flesh, the passions of sinnes which were by the Law, did worke in our members to bring forth fruit unto Death. For these pleasures of the body draw us as loadstones draw iron, not for love, but for prey and nutriment ; it feeds upon the iron, as the bodily pleasures upon the life of the spirit, which is lessened, and impaired according as the gusts of the flesh grow high and rapid.

He that feeds a lyon must obey him, unlesse he make his den to be his prison : our lusts are as wilde, and as cruel beasts, and unlesse they feel the load of fetters and of lawes, will grow unruly and troublesome, and increase upon us, as we give them food and satisfaction ; he, that is used to drink high wines, is sick if he hath not his proportion to what ad Dæmonie.

11.

Prov. 29. 27.

1. Cor. 9. 27.

Rom. 6. 4.

Hebr. 12. 2.

1 Pet. 2. 1.

Eccl. 4. 1.

Rom. 7. 5.

12.

Apostolus ait, cum in carne

et in lege

et in lege

et in lege

et in lege

what degree soever his custome hath brought his appetite; and to some men, Temperance becomes certain death, because the inordination of their desires hath introduced a custome, and custome hath increased those appetites, and made them almost naturall in their degree; but he that hath been used to hard diet, and the pure stream; his refreshments are much within the limits of temperance, and his desires as moderate as his diet. "S. Jerome affirms that, to be continent in the state of widowhood is harder, "then to keep our virgin pure: and there is reason, that then the appetite should be harder to be restrained, when it hath not been accustomed to be denied, but satisfied in its freer solicitations. When a fontinell is once opened, all the symbollicall humours run thither, and issue out, and it is not to be stopped without danger, unless the humour be purged or diverted: So is the satisfaction of an impure desire, it opens the issue and makes way for the emanation of all impurity, and unless the desire be mortified, will not be stopp'd by purposes and easy desires.

13.

Since therefore the body is the instrument of sins, the fewel and the incentive, our mortification must reach thither also, at least in some degrees, or it will be to small purpose to think of mortifying our spirit in some instances of temptation; In vain does that man think to keep his honour and chastity, that invites his lust to an activeness by soft beds and high diet, and idleness and opportunity; make the souls instrument unapt, and half the work is done. And this is true in all instances of carnality or naturall desires; whose scene lies in the lower region of passions, and are acted by the body; but the operation of the cure must be in proportion to the disease; as the mortification of the spirit is in severall degrees: so the mortification of the body also hath its severall parts of prudence, injunction and necessity. For the prescribing all sorts of mortifications corporall, indefinitely and indifferently to all persons, without separation of their ends, and distinct capacities is a snare to mens Consciences, makes religion impertinently troublesome, occasions some men to glory in corporall austeritie, as if of it self it were an act of piety, and a distinction of the man from the more imperfect persons of the world, and is all the way unreasonable and inartificiall.

14.

Huic epulæ
cisse sa rem mag-
niq; penates
Summovisse hy-
emem tecto pre-
tiosaq; vestis
Hirta in membra
super Horani
more Quiritis
Induxisse togam.
De Catone dixit
Lucanus, & de e-
odem.
Intronsus rigidam
in frontem de-
scendere canos
passus erat, et æ-
stamq; genis in-
arescere barbam.

1. Therefore such whose ingagments in the world or capacities of person confine them to the lowest and first step of mortification, those who fight onely for life and liberty, not for privileges and honour, that are in perpetuall contestation and close fightings with sin, it is necessary that their body also be mortified in such a degree, that their desires transport them not beyond the permissions of divine and humane Laws: let such men be strict in the rules of Temperance and sobriety, be chaste within the laws of marriage, cherish their body to preserve their health, and their health to serve GOD, and to do their offices: to these persons the best instruments of discipline are the strict laws of Temperance, denying all transgressions of the appetite boyling over its margent and proper limit, assiduous prayer and observation of the publike laws of fasting, which are framed so moderate and even as to be proportionable to the common manner of living of persons secular and incumbered. For though many persons of common employments and even manner of living have in the midst of worldly avocations undertaken austerities very rude and rigorous, yet it was in order to a higher mortification of Spirit; and it is also necessary they should, if either naturally, or habitually,

habitually, or easily they suffer violent transportation of passions: for since the occasions of anger and disturbance in the world frequently occur, if such passions be not restrained by greater violence, then is competent to the ordinary offices of a moderate piety, the cure is weaker then the humour, and so leaves the work imperfect.

2. But this is coincident to the second degree of mortification, for if either out of desire of a farther step towards perfection, or out of the necessities of nature or evill customes it be necessary also to subdue our passions as well as the direct invitations to sinne, in both these cases the body must suffer more austerities, even such as directly are contrariant to every passionate disturbance, though it be not ever sinfull in the instance. All Mortifiers must abstaine from every thing that is unlawfull, but these that they may abstaine from things *unlawfull*, must also deny to themselves satisfaction in things *lawfull and pleasant*; and this is in a just proportion to the end, the subduing the passions, lest their liberty and boldnesse become licentious. And we shall easier deny their importunity to sin, when we will not please them in those things in which we may: such in which the feare of GOD, and the danger of our soules, and the convictions of reason and religion doe not immediately cooperate. And this was the practise of David, when he had thirsted for the waters of Bethlehem, and some of his worthies ventured their lives and brought it, he refused to drinke it, but poured it upon the ground unto the Lord, that is, it became a drink-offering unto the Lord: an acceptable oblation, in which he sacrificed his desires to GOD, denying himself the satisfaction of such a desire, which was naturall and innocent, save that it was something nice, delicate and curious. Like this was the act of the Fathers in the mountain Nitria, to one of which a fair cluster of dried grapes being sent, he refused to taste them, least he should be too sensuall and much pleased, but sent them to another, and he to a third, and the same consideration transmitted the present through all their cells, till it came to the first man again: all of them not daring to content their appetite in a thing too much desired, lest the like importunity in the instance of a sin should prevail upon them. To these persons the best instruments of Discipline are subtractions rather then imposition of austerities; let them be great haters of corporall pleasures, eating for necessity, diet spare and cheap; abridging and making short the opportunities of naturall and permitted solaces, * refusing exterior comforts, not choosing the most pleasant object, not suffering delight to be the end of eating, and therefore separating delight from it as much as prudently they may, not being too importunate with God to remove this gentler hand of paternal correction but inuring our selves to patient suffering, and indifferent acceptance of the Crosse that GOD layes upon us; at no hand living *delicately*, or *curiously* or *impatiently*. And this was the condition of S. Paul, suffering with excellent temper all those persecutions and inconveniences, which the enemies of religion loaded him withall; which he called, bearing the marks of the Lord JESUS in his body: and carrying about in his body the dying or mortification of the Lord JESUS; it was in the matter of persecution, which because he bore patiently, and was accustomed to, and he accepted with indifference and renunciation, they were the mortifications and the marks of JESUS, that is, a true conformity to the passion of CHRIST, and of great effect and interest for the preventing sins by the mortification of his naturall desires.

15.

2. Sam. 23. 17.

Apud Pallad. in histor. Lausiac.

* Quanto quisque sibi plura negaverit
A Diis plura secret. Hor.2. Cor. 4. 10.
Gal. 6. 17.

3. Eut.

16.

3- But in the pale of the church there are and have been many tall Cedars, whose tops have reached to heaven; some there are, that choole afflictions of the body that by turning the bent and inclination of their affections into sensuall displeasures, they may not onely cut off all pretensions of temptation, but grow in spirituall graces, and perfections intellectuall and beariſied. To this purpose they served themselves with the instances of sack-cloth, hard lodging, long fasts, pernoctation in prayers, renunciation of all secular possessions, great and expensive charity, bodily labours to great wearineſſe and affliction, and many other prodigies of voluntary suffering, which scripture and the Ecclesiastical stories do frequently mention. S. Lewis King of France wore sackcloth every day, unleſſe ſickneſſe hindred; and S. Zenobius as long as he was a Biſhop; And when Severus Sulpicius sent a sackcloth to S. Paulinus Biſhop of Nola, he returned to him a letter of thanks, and diſcourſed piously concerning the uſe of corporal auſterities: and that I need not inſtance, it was ſo generall that this was by way of appropriation called the *garment of the Church*, becauſe of the frequent uſe of ſuch inſtruments of exeriour mortification, and ſo it was in other inſtances. S. James neither eate fleſh nor drank wine, S. Matthew lived upon acorns, ſeeds and herbs; and amongſt the elder Chriſtians, ſome rolled themſelves naked in ſnows, ſome upon thorns, ſome on burning coales, ſome chewed bitter pills, and maſticated gummies, and ſipped frequently on horrid potions, and wore iron vpon their ſkin, and bolts vpon their legs, and in witty torments excelled the cruelty of many of their perſecutors, whoſe rage determined quickly in death, and had certainly leſſe of torment, then the tedious afflictions and rude penances of Simeon ſurnamed *Stylites*. But as all great examples have excellencies above the ordinary deuotions of good people, ſo have they ſome danger and much conſideration.

17.

1. Therefore I conſider, that theſe bodily and voluntary ſelf afflictions can onely be of uſe in carnall and naturall temptations, of no uſe in ſpiritual: for aſcetic diet, hard lodging, and ſevere diſciplines cannot be directly operative vpon the ſpirit, but onely by mediation of the body, by abating its extravagancies, by ſubtracting its maintenance, by leſſening its temptations; theſe may help to preſerve the ſoul chaſt, or temperate, becauſe the ſcene of theſe ſins lyes in the body, and thence they have their maintenance, and from thence alſo may receive their * abatements; but in actions, which are leſſe materiall, ſuch as pride, and envy, and blaſphemy and impenitence, and all the kindes and degrees of malice, externall mortifications do ſo little cooperate to their cure, that often times they are their greateſt inflamers and incentives, and are like cordials given to cure a cold fit of an ague, they do their work, but bring a hot fit in its place; and beſides that great mortifiers have been ſoonest affaulted by the ſpirit of pride, we finde that great faſters are naturally angry and cholerick. S. Hierom found it in himſelf, and Rufinus felt ſome of the effects of it, and therefore this laſt part of corporal mortification, and the chooſing ſuch afflictions by a voluntary impoſition is at no hand to be applied in all caſes, but in caſes of luſt only and intemperance or naturall impatience, or ſuch crimes which dwell in the ſenſes, and then it alſo would be conſidered, whether or no any ſuch auſterities which can conſiſt with health will do the work; ſo long as the body is in health, it will do its offices of nature; if it is not in health

Depoſuerunt ſe
culi byſum, &
ſumpſerunt Ecce-
ſie veſtimentum,
quod eſt cilici-
um Ruricius.
ep. 10.
a Rule. l. 2. hiſt.
c. 22.
b Clem. Alex-
Paſag. l. 2. c. 1

* Εὐλασμοὶ τοῦ
σώματος ὡς τῆς
καρδίας πονηρίας
ὡς αἰσθητῶν ἀρετῶν.
τῶν θεσπείων.
Antiphan.

health, it cannot do all offices of grace, nor many of our calling; and therefore although they may do some advantages to persons tempted with the lowest sins, yet it were better that the mortification of the spirit, to the greatest and most perfect purposes were set upon by means spiritual and of immediate efficacy; for they are the lowest operations of the soul, which are moved and produced by actions corporall; the soul may from those become lustfull or chaff, cheerful or sad, timorous or confident; but yet even in these the soul receives but some dispositions thence, and more forward inclinations; but nothing from the body can be operative in the begetting or increase of charity, or the love of GOD, or devotion, or in mortifying spirituall and intellectuall vices: and therefore those greater perfections, and heights of the soul, such as are designed in this highest degree of mortification are not apt to be enkindled by corporall austerities, and therefore *Nigrinus* in *Lucian* findes fault with those Phylosophers, who thought vertue is purchased by cutting the skin with whips, binding the nerves, *razing the body with iron*: but he taught that vertue is to be placed in *the mind by actions internall and immateriall* and that from thence remedies are to be derived against perturbations and actions criminall. And this is determined by the Apostle in fairest intimation, *Mortify therefore your earthly members*; and he instances in carnall crimes, *fornication, uncleannesse, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousnesse*, which are things may be something abated by corporall mortifications, and that these are by distinct manner to be helped from other more spirituall vices, he addes, *but now therefore put off all these, anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication and lying*: to both these sorts of sins, mortification being the generall remedy, particular applications are to be made, and it must be onely spirituall or also corporall in proportion to the nature of the sins: he seems to distinguish the remedy by separation of the nature of the crimes, and possibly also by the differing words of [mortify] applied to carnall sins, and [put off] to crimes spirituall.

2. But in the lesser degrees of mortification in order to subduing of all passions of the sensitive appetite, and the consequent and symbolically fin, bodily austerities are of good use, if well understood and prudently undertaken; to which purpose I also consider. No acts of corporall austerity or externall religion are of themselves to be esteemed holy or acceptable to GOD; are no where precisely commanded, no instruments of union with CHRIST, no immediate parts of divine worship; and therefore to suffer corporall austerities with thoughts determining upon the externall action or imaginations of sanctity inherent in the action is against the purity, the spirituality, and simplicity of the Gospel. And this is the meaning of S. Paul, *It is a good thing that the heart be established with grace, not with meates, which have not profited them, which walked in them; and, the kingdome of GOD consists not in meat and drink but in righteousness and peace and joy in the holy Ghost. And bodily exercise profiteth little, but godlinesse is profitable unto all things.* Now if externall mortifications are not for themselves, then they are to receive their estimate as they cooperate to the end; Whatsoever is a prudent restraint of an extravagant passion, whatsoever is a direct deniall of a sin, whatsoever makes provision for the spirit, or withdrawes the fuell from the impure fires of carnality, that is an act of mortification; but those austerities which Baals Priests did use, or the Flagellantes, and

[illegible]

Lucian Nigrin.
Col. 3. 5.
Ut corpus redi-
massetur pati-
eris & ignes
Arida tuae fies
ora lavabis a-
qua
Ut va'eas animo
quicquid: tole-
rare negabis
Νεκροῦς τὰ
μύλα
ἀποθνή τὰ
παῖν.
* ἵζου καὶ ἐν
πλάτῃ μεστῶν,
18.

Clem. Alex.
Pedag. 2.
Hebr. 13. 9.
Rom. 14. 17.

ignorant faction that went up and down villages whipping themselves, or those which return periodically on a set day of Discipline, and using rudenesses to the body by way of ceremony and solemnity, not directed against the actual incurion of a pungent lust are not within the verge of the grace of mortification. For unlesse the temptation to a camall sin be actually incumbent and pressing upon the Soul, pains of infliction and smart do no benefit toward suppressing the habit or inclination : for such sharp disciplines are but flur and transient troubles ; and although they take away the present fancies of a temptation, yet unlesse it be rash and uncharitable there is no effect remanent upon the body but that the temptation may speedily return. As is the danger, so must be the application of the remedy ; actual severities are not imprudently undertaken in case of imminent danger, but to cure an habituall lust, such corporall mortifications are most reasonable, whose effect is permanent, and which takes away whatsoever does minister more fuel, and puts a torch to the pile.

19.

But this is altogether a discourse of Christian prudence, not of precise duty and religion, for if we do by any means provide for our indemnity and secure our innocence, all other exteriour mortifications are not necessary, and they are convenient but as they do facilitate, or cooperate towards the end. And if that be well understood it will concern us that they be used with prudence and caution, with purity of intention, and without pride; for since they are *nothing in themselves*, but are hallowed and adopted into the family of religious actions by participation of the end, the doing them not for themselves takes off all complacencie and fancy reflecting from an opinion of the externall actions; guides and purifies the intention, and teaches us to be prudent in the managing of those austerities which as they are in themselves afflictive, so have in them nothing that is eligible, if they be imprudent.

20.
Kw tsa² tse²
maw² tse² ai-
tse² tse² tse² tse²-
... tse² tse² tse²
... tse² tse² tse²
... tse² tse² tse²
... tse² tse² tse²
Nienj. and Lu.

And now supposing these premises as our guide to choose and enter into the action, Prudence must be called into the execution and discharge of it, and the manner of its managing; and for the prudentiall part, I shall first give the advice of *Nigrinus* in the discipline of the old Philosophers; *He that will best institute and instruct men in the studies of vertue and true Philosophy, must have regard to the minde, to the body, to the age, to the former education, and capacities or incapacities of the person; to which all such circumstances may be added as are to be accounted for in all prudent estimations; such as are national customes, dangers of scandall, the presence of other remedies, or distending of the inclination.*

21.

2. It may also concern the prudence of this duty not to neglect the smallest inadvertencies and minutes of lust or spirituall inconvenience, but to contradict them in their weaknesse, and first beginnings. We see that great disturbances are brought from the smallest occasions meeting with an impatient spirit, like great flames kindled from a little spark, fallen into an heap of prepared nitre. S. *Austin* tells a story of a certain person much vexed with flies in the region of his dwelling, and himself heightened the trouble by too violent and busy reflection upon the inconsiderableness of the instrument, and the greatnesse of the vexation alighting upon a peevish spirit. In this disposition he was visited by a Manichee (a heretick, that denyed GOD to be the maker of things visible :) he being busy to rub his infection upon the next thing

thing he met, asked the impatient person whom he thought to be the maker of flies? He answered, I think the Devil was: for they are instruments of great vexation and perpetual trouble: what he rather fancied then believed, or expressed by anger, rather then at all had entertain'd within, the Manichee confirm'd by such arguments to which his adversary was very apt to give consent by reason of his impatience and peevishness. The Manichee having set his foot firm upon this first breach proceeded in his Question, If the Devil made Flies, why not bees, who are but a little bigger, and have a sting too? The consideration of the sting made him see to think, that the little difference in bignesse needed not a distinct and a greater Efficient, especially since the same workman can make a gear as well as a little vessel. The Manichee proceeded, If a Bee why not a Locust? if a Locust, then a Lizzard, if a Lizzard, then a Bird, if a Bird, then a Lamb, and thence he made bold to proceed to a Cow, to an Elephant, to a Man. His adversary by this time being insnared by granting so much, and now ashamed not to grant more, left his first concessions should seem unreasonable and impious, confessed the Devil to be the Maker of all Creatures visible. The use which is made of this story, is this caution, that the Devil do not abuse us in Flies, and provoke our spirits by trifles and impertinent accidents; for if we be unmortified in our smallest motions it is not imaginable, we should stand the blast of an impetuous accident and violent perturbation. Let us not therefore give our passions course in a small accident, because the instance is inconsiderable; for though it be, the consequence may be dangerous, and a wave may follow a wave till the inundation be generall and desperate. And therefore here it is intended for advice, that we be observant of the accidents of our domestick affairs, and curious that every trifling inadvertency of a servant, or slight misbecoming action, or imprudent words be not apprehended as instruments of vexation: for so many small occasions, if they be productive of many small disturbances will produce an habitual churlishnesse and immortification of spirit.

3. Let our greatest diligence and care be employed in mortifying our predominant passion: for if our care be so great, as not to entertain the smallest, and our resolution so strong and holy, as not to be subdued by the greatest and most passionate desires, the Spirit hath done all its work, secures the future, and sanctifies the present, and nothing is wanting but perseverance in the same prudence and religion; and this is typically commanded in the precept of GOD to Moses and Aaron in the matter of Peor; *Vex the Midianites, because they vexed you, and made you sin by their daughters*; and Phineas did so; he kill'd a Prince of the house of *Simou*, and a Princess of *Midian*, and GOD confirmed the priesthood to him for ever; meaning that we shall for ever be admitted to a neerer relation to GOD, if we sacrifice to GOD our dearest lust; and this is not so properly an act, as the end of Mortification; therefore it concerns the prudence of the duty, that all the efficacy and violence of it be employed against the strongest, and there where is the most dangerous hostility.

4. But if we mean to be Masters of the field and put our victory past dispute, let us mortifie our meeknesse and naturall averiations, reducing them to an indifferency, having in our wills no fondnesses, in our spirits no faction of persons or nations: being prepared to love all men, and to endure all things, and to undertake all employments which are duty or counsel in all

circumstances and disadvantages. For the excellency of Evangelical sanctity does surmount all Antipathies, as a vessel climbs up, and rides upon a wave; *the Wolf and the Lamb shall cohabit, and a Childe shall play and put his fingers in the Cavern of an Aspid*; nations whose interest are most contradictory, must be knit by the confederations of a mortified and a Christian Spirit, and single persons must triumph over the difficulties of an indisposed nature, or els their own will is unmortified, and nature is stronger then can well consist with the dominion and absolute empire of grace. To this I reduce such peevish and unhandsome nicenesses in matters of religion, that are unsatisfied, unlesse they have all exteriour circumstances, trimm'd up and made pompous for their religious offices, such who cannot pray without a convenient room, and their devotion is made active onely by a well built chappel, and they cannot sing lauds without Church musick, and too much light dissolves their intention, and too much dark promotes their melancholy; and because these and the like exteriour ministries are good advantages, therefore without them they can do nothing; which certainly is a great intimation and likeness to immortification. Our will should be like the Candle of the eye, without all colour in it self, that it may entertain the species of all colours from without: and when we lust after mandrakes and deliciousnes of exteriour ministries, we many times are brought to betray our own interest, and prostitute our dearest affections to more ignoble and stranger desires. Let us love all natures, and serve all persons, and pray in all places, and fast without opportunities, and do alms above our power, and set our selves heartily on work to neglect and frustrate those lower temptations of the Devil, who will frequently enough make our religion inopportune, if we then will make it infrequent, and will present us with objects enough and flies to disquiet our persons, if our natures be petulant, peevish, curious and unmortified.

24.

It is a great mercy of GOD to have an affable, sweet and well disposed nature, and it does half the work of Mortification for us; we have the lesse trouble to subdue our passions and destroy our lusts. But then as those, whose natures are morose, cholerick, peevish and lustfull, have greater difficulty, so is their vertue of greater excellence, and returned with a more ample reward: but it is in all mens natures, as with them who gathered Manna, *they that gathered little had no lack, and they that gathered much had nothing over*; they who are of ill natures shall want * no assistance of GODS grace to work their cure, though their flesh be longer healing, and they who are sweetly tempered, being naturally meek and modest, chaste, or temperate will finde work enough to contest against their temptations from without, though from within possibly they may have fewer; yet there are greater degrees of vertue and heroical excellencies, and great rewards to which GOD hath designed them by so fair dispositions, and it will concern all their industry to mortifie their spirit, which though it be malleable and more ductile, yet it is as bare and naked of imagery, as the rudest and most iron nature: so that *mortification* will be every mans duty; no nature, nor piety, nor wisdom, nor perfection but will need it, either to subdue a lust or a passion, to cut off an occasion, or to resist a temptation, to persevere or to go on, to secure our present estate or to proceed towards perfection. But all men do not think so.

25.

For there are some who have great peace; no fightings within, no troubles without, no disputes or contradictions in their spirit: but these men have the peace of tributaries or a conquered people, the gates of their city stand open.

* Nemo adeo f-
rus est, ut non
misericors possit
Si modo cultura
patientem com-
modet aux.m.
Hor. ep. 1.

open day and night, that all the carriages may enter without disputing the passe: the flesh and the spirit dispute not, because the spirit is there in pupillage or in bonds, and the flesh rides in triumph, with the tyranny, and pride and impotency of a female Tyrant. For in the sense of religion we all are *warriers* or *slaves*; either our selves are stark dead in trespasses and sins, or we need to stand perpetually upon our guards in continual observation, and in contestation against our lusts and our passions; so long denying and contradicting our own wills, till we will and choose to do things against our wills having an eye alwayes to those infinite satisfactions which shall glorify our wills, and all our faculties, when we arrive to that state, in which there shall be no more contradiction, but onely that our mortall shall put on immortality.

But as some have a vain and dangerous peace, so others double their trouble by too nice and impertinent scruples, thinking that every temptation is a degree of immortification; as long as we live we shall have to do with Enemies; but as this life is ever a state of imperfection, so the very designe and purpose of Mortification is not to take away temptations, but to overcome them: it endeavours to facilitate the work, and secure our condition by removing all occasions it can: but the opportunity of a crime, and the sollicitation to a sin is no fault of ours, unlesse it be of our procuring, or findes entertainment when it comes unsent for. To suffer a temptation is a misery, but if we then set upon the mortification of it, it is an occasion of vertue, and never is criminall, unlesse we give consent. But then also it would be considered, that it is not good offering our selves to *fire ordeals* to confirm our innocence, nor prudent to enter into battel without need, and to shew our valour; nor safe to procure a temptation, that we may have the reward of mortification of it. For Mortification of the spirit is not commanded, as a duty finally resting in it self, or immediately landing upon GODS glory, such as are acts of charity and devotion, chastity and justice; but it is the great instrument of humility and all other graces: and therefore is to be undertaken to destroy a sin, and to secure a vertuous habit; and besides that to call on a danger is to tempt GOD, and to invite the Devil, (and no man is sure of a victory;) it is also great imprudence to create a need, that we may take it away again; to drink poyson to make experiment of the antidote; and at the best it is but a running back to come just to the same place again; for he that is not tempted, does not sin: but he that invites a temptation, that he might overcome it, or provokes a Passion, that he may allay it, is then but in the same condition after his pains and his danger: He was not sure he should come so far.

26.

Vide disc. of 1
Temptation.

The PRAYER.

O Dearest GOD, who hast framed man of soul and body, and fitted him with faculties, and proportionable instruments to serve thee according to all

our capacities: let thy Holy Spirit rule and sanctifie every power and member both of soul and body, that they may keep that beauteous order, which in our creation thou didst intend, and to which thou doest restore thy people in the renovations of grace that our affections may be guided by reason, our understanding may be enlightened with thy word, and then may guide and perswade our will, that we suffer no violent transportation of passions, nor be overcome by a temptation, nor consent to the impure solicitations of lust; that sin may not reign in our mortal bodies, but that both bodies and souls may be conformable to the sufferings of the holy JESUS, that in our bodie we may bear the marks and dying of our LORD: and in our spirits we may be humble and mortified, and like him in all his imitable perfections, that we may die to sin and live to righteousness, and after our suffering together with him in this world, we may reign together with him hereafter, to whom in the unity of the most mysterious Trinity be all glory and dominion and praise for ever and ever. Amen.



Sect. 9.

Of JESUS being baptized, and going into the wilderness to be tempted.

L.

NOW the full time was come, JESUS took leave of his Mother and his trade, to begin his Fathers work and the Office Propheticall in order to the redemption of the world; and when John was baptizing in Jordan, JESUS came to John to be baptized of him. The Baptist had never seen his face, because they had been from their infancy driven to severall places, designed to severall employments, and never met till now. But immediately the holy Ghost inspired S. John with a discerning and knowing spirit, and at his first arrivall he knew him, and did him worship. And when Jesus desired to be baptized, John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee and comest thou to me? For the Baptisme of John, although it was not a direct instrument of the spirit for the collation of grace, nor that we finde administred in any form of words, nor so much as in the name of CHRIST to come (as many dream) because even after John had baptized the Pharisees still doubted, if he were the Messias, which they would not, if in his form of ministration he had published CHRIST to come after him: and also because it had not been proper for CHRIST himself to have received that baptism, whose form had specified himself to come hereafter) yet it was a ceremonious signification of the doctrine of repentance, which was one great part

¶ Gabriel, Sotus,
Scotus, &c.

part of the Covenant Evangelical, and was a Divine institution, the suspension of it was in order to the fulfilling all righteousness, it was a signe of humility, the persons baptized confessed their sins, it was a sacramental disposing to the baptism of CHRIST; but therefore *John* wondered, why the *Messias*, the Lambe of GOD, pure and without spot, who needed not the alterations of repentance, or the washings of baptism, should demand it, and of him, a sinner and his servant.

But the holy JESUS who came (as himself in answer to the Baptists question professed) to fulfil all righteousness, would receive that rite which his Father had instituted in order to the manifestation of his Sonne. For although the Baptist had a glimpse of him by the first irradiations of the Spirit, yet *John* professed That he therefore came baptizing with water, that *Jesus* might be manifested to Israel, and it was also a signe given to the Baptist himself, that on whomsoever he saw the spirit descending and remaining, he is the person that baptizeth with the holy Ghost. And GOD chose to actuate the signe at the waters of Jordan in great and religious assemblies conven'd there at *Johns* baptism, and therefore JESUS came to be baptized, and by this baptism became known to *John* (who as before he gave to him an indiscriminate testimony, so now he pointed out the person in his Sermons and discourses.) He was now manifest to Israel, he confirmed the baptism of *John*, he sanctified the water to become sacramental and ministerial in the remission of sins, and he did in a symbol purifie humane nature, whose stains and guilt he had undertaken.

As soon as *John* had performed his ministry, and *Jesus* was baptized, he prayed and the heavens were opened and the air clarified by a new and glorious light, and the holy Ghost in the visible representation of a Dove alighted upon his sacred head, and GOD the Father gave a voice from Heaven, saying, *Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* This was the inauguration and proclamation of the *Messias*, when he began to be the Great Prophet of the New Covenant. And this was the greatest meeting that ever was upon earth, where the whole Cabinet of the mysterious Trinity was opened, and shewn, as much as the capacities of our present imperfections will permit: the second person in the veil of humanity, the third in the shape of a Dove, but the first kept his primitive state, and as to the Israelites he gave notice by way of caution, *ye saw no shape, but ye heard a voice*; so now also GOD the Father gave testimony to his holy Son, and appeared onely in a voice, without any visible representation.

When the rite and the solemnity was over, CHRIST ascended up out of the waters, and left so much virtue behinde him, that, as *Gregorius Turonensis* reports, that creek of the River, where his holy body had been baptized, was indued with a healing quality, and a power of curing Lepers, that bath'd themselves in those waters, in the faith and with invocation of the holy Name of JESUS. But the manifestation of this power was not till afterwards, for as yet JESUS did no miracles.

As soon as ever the SAVIOUR of the World was baptized, had opened the heavens, which yet never had been opened to Man, and was declared the Sonne of GOD, JESUS was by the Spirit driven into the Wilderness, not by an unnatural violence, but by the efficacies of inspiration, and a supernatural inclination and activity of resolution; for he

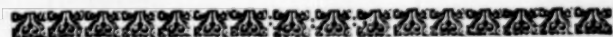
was the holy spirit that bore him thither, he was lead by the good Spirit, to be tempted by the *evil*, whither also he was pleased to retire to make demonstration that even in an active life, such as he was designed to and intended, some recesses and temporary dimissions of the world are most expedient, for such persons especially whose office is Propheticall, and for institution of others; that by such vacancies in prayer and contemplation they may be better enabled to teach others, when they have in such retirements conversed with God.

- 6 In the Desert, which was four miles from the place of his Baptisme, and about twenty miles from Jerusalem, as the common computations are, he did abide fourty dayes, and fourty nights, where he was perpetually disturbed and assaulted with evil spirits, in the midst of wilde beasts, in a continuall fast without eating bread or drinking water; and the *Angels ministred to him*, being Messengers of comfort and sustentation sent from his Father for the support and service of his humanity, and employed in resisting and discountenancing the assaults and temporall hostilities of the spirits of darknesse.

- 7 Whether the Devils appeared in any horrid and affrighting shapess is not certain; but it is more likely, to a person of so great sanctity and high designation they would appear more Angelical and immateriall, in representments intellectuall, in words and idea's, temptations and incitements, because JESUS was not a person of those low weaknessees to be affrighted or troubled with an ugly phantasme, which can do nothing but abuse the weak and imperfect conceptions of persons nothing extraordinary. And this was the way which Satan or the Prince of the Devils took, whose temptations were reserved for the last assault, and the great day of triall, for at the expiration of his fourty dayes, JESUS being hungry, the tempter invited him onely to eat bread of his own providing, which might refresh his humanity and prove his Divinity, hoping that his hunger, and the desire of convincing the Devil, might tempt him to eat before the time appointed. But *Jesus answered, It is written Man shall not live by Bread alone, but by every word that proceedes out of the mouth of God.*

- 8 The Devil having failed in this assault, tries him again, requiring but a demonstration of his being the Son of GOD. He sets him upon a pinnacle of the Temple, and invites him to throw himself down, upon a pretence that *GOD would send his Angels to keep his Son*, and quotes Scripture for it: but JESUS understood it well; and though he was secur'd of GODS protection, yet he would not tempt GOD, nor sollicite his providence to a dereliction by tempting him to an unnecessary conservation. This assault was silly and weak. But at last he unites all his power of stratagem, and places the holy JESUS upon an exceeding high Mountain, and by an Angelical power draws into one Center Species and Idea's from all the Kingdoms and glories of the World, and makes an admirable Map of beauties, and represents it to the eyes of JESUS, saying, that, all that was put into his power to give, and he would give it him, *if he would fall down and worship him*. But then the holy Lamb was angry as a provoked Lion, and commanded him away, when his temptations were violent and his demands impudent and blasphemous. *Then the Devil leaveth him, and the Angels came and ministred unto him*, bringing such things as his necessities required, after he had by

by a fourty dayes fast done penance for our sins, and consign'd to his Church the doctrine and discipline of fasting, in order to a contemplative life, and the resisting and overcoming all the temptations and allurements of the Devil, and all our ghostly enemies.



Ad. Sect. 9.

Considerations upon the baptizing, fasting, and temptation of holy JESUS by the Devil.



When the day did break, and the Baptist was busie in his offices, the Sun of Righteousnesse soon entred upon our Hemisphere; and after he had lived a life of darknesse and silence for thirty yeers together, yet now that he came to do the greatest work in the World, and to minister in the most honourable Embassie, he would do nothing of singularity, but fulfil all righteousness and satisfie all Commands, and joyn in the common rites and Sacraments, which all people innocent or penitent did undergo, either as deleteries of sin or instruments of grace. For so he would needs be baptized by his servant; and though he was of purity sufficient to do it, and did actually by his baptism purifie the purifier, and sanctifie that, and all other streams to a holy ministry and effect, yet he went in, bowing his head like a sinner, unclothing himself like an imperfect person, and craving to be washt, as if he had been crusted with an impure leprousie, thereby teaching us to submit our selves to all those rites which he would institute; and although some of them, be like the baptism of John joyned with confession of sins, and publication of our infirmities, yet it were better for us, to lay by our loads, and wash our ulcers, then by concealing them, out of vainer desires of impertinent reputation, cover our disease till we are heart-sick and dye. But when so holy a person does all the pious ministries of the more imperfect, it is a demonstration to us, that a life common and ordinary, without affectation or singularity, is the most prudent and safe. Every great change, every violence of fortune, all eminencies and unevennesses whatsoever, whither of person or accident or circumstance, puts us to a new trouble, requires a distinct care, creates new dangers, objects more temptations, marks us out the object of envy, makes our standing more insecure, and our fall more contemptible and ridiculous. But an even life spent with as much rigour of duty to GOD as ought to be, yet in the same manner of devotions, in the suscepcion of ordinary offices, in bearing publick burdens, frequenting publick assemblies, performing offices of civility, receiving all the rites of an established religion, complying with national customes, and hereditary solemnities of a people, in nothing disquieting publick peace, or disfreshing the great instruments of an innocent communion, or dissolving the circumstantial ligaments of charity, or breaking Laws, and the great relations and necessitudes of the World, out of fancy or singularity, is the best way to live *holyly* and *safely*, and *happily*: safer from sin & envy, and more removed from trouble & retemptation.

When

2.

When JESUS came to John to be baptized, John out of humility and modesty refused him, but when JESUS by reduplication of his desire, fortifying it with a command, made it in the Baptist to become a duty, then he obeyed. And so also did the primitive Clerks refuse to do offices of great dignity, and highest ministry, looking through the honour upon the danger, and passing by the dignity they considered the charge of the cure, and knew, that the eminency of the office was in all senses *insecure* to the person, till by command and peremptory injunction of their Superiors it was put past a dispute, and became necessary, and that either they must perish instantly in the ruins and precipices of disobedience, or put it to the hazard, and a fair venture for a brighter crown, or a bigger damnation. I wish also this care were entailed, and did descend upon all ages of the Church; for the ambitious seeking of dignities and prelatures Ecclesiasticall is grown the Pest of the Church, and corrupts the salt it self, and extinguishes the lights, and gives too apparent evidences to the world that neither the end is pure, nor the intention sanctified, nor the person innocent, but the purpose ambitious or covetous, and the person vitious, and the very entrance into Church offices is with an impure torch, and a foul hand, or a heart empty of the affections of religion, or thoughts of doing Gods work. I do not think the present age is to be treated with, concerning denying to accept rich Prelacies and pompous dignities, but it were but reasonable that the main intention, and intellectuall design should be to appreciate, and esteem the office and employment to be of greatest consideration. It is lawfull to desire a Bishoprick, neither can the unwillingness to accept it be, in a prudent account, adjudged the apostate disposition to receive it, (especially if done in * ceremony, just in the instant of their entertainment of it, and possibly after a long ambition) but yet it were well if we remember, that such desires must be sanctified with holy care and diligence in the office; for the honey is guarded with thousands of little, and sharp stings and dangers, and it will be a sad account, if we be called to audite for the crimes of our *Diocesse*, after our *own talleys* are made even; and he, that beleeveth his *own* load to be big enough, and trembles at the apprehension of the horrors of Doomsday, is not very wise, if he takes up those burdens, which, he sees, have crushed their Bearers, and presses his own shoulders till the bones crack, onely because the bundles are wrapt in white linnen, and bound with silken cords. *He that desires the office of a Bishop, desires a good work*, saith S. Paul, and therefore we must not look on it for the fair *spreading sails* and the beauteous streamers, which the favour of Princes hath put to it, to make it faire, and more secure against the dangers of secular discomfords; but upon the *burden* it bears; Prelacy is a good work, and a good work well done is very honourable, and shall be rewarded, but he, that considers the infinite dangers of miscarrying, and that the losse of the ship will be imputed to the Pilot, may think it many times the safest course to put God or his superiours to the charge of a Command, before he undertakes such great ministeries; And he that enters in by the force of authority as he himself receives a testimony of his worth and aptness to the employment, so he gives the world another, that his search for it was not criminal, nor his person immodest, and by his weighty apprehension of his dangers he will consider his work and obtain a grace to do it diligently, and to be accepted graciously. And this was the modesty and prudence of the Baptist.

When

*In Pontifical.
Rom.

When Jesus was baptized, he prayed and the heavens were opened. External rites of Divine Institution receive benediction and energy from above, but it is by the mediation of *Prayer*; * for there is nothing ritual, but it is also joyned with something moral, and required on our part in all persons capable of the use of reason, that we may understand that the blessings of Religion are *works* and *graces* too; GOD therefore requiring us to do something, not that we may glory in it, but that we may estimate the grace, and go to GOD for it in the means of his own hallowing; *Naaman* had been stupid, if when the Prophet bad him wash seven times in Jordan for his cure, he had not confessed the cure to be wrought by the GOD of Israel, and the ministry of his Prophet, but had made himself the Author, because of his obedience to the enjoined condition; and it is but a weak fancy to derogate from GODS grace, and the glory and the freedom of it, because he bids us wash before we are cleansed, and pray when we are washed, and commands us to ask before we shall receive. But this also is true from this instance, that the external rite of Sacrament, is so instrumental in a spiritual grace, that it never does it, but with the conjunction of something moral; and this truth is of so great perswasion in the Greek Church, that the mystery of Consecration in the venerable Eucharist is amongst them attributed not to any mystical words, and secret operations of syllables, but to the efficacy of the prayers of the Church, in the just imitation of the whole action, and the rite of institution. And the purpose of it is, that we might secure the excellence and holiness of such predispositions, and concomitant graces, which are necessary to the worthy and effectual suscepcion of the external rites of Christianity.

Iustin Mart. apol. Buseb. Epist. Iren. c. de pasch. S. August. l. 3 c. 4. de Trin.

After the holy JESUS was baptized and had prayed, *the Heavens opened, the holy Ghost descended*, and a voice from Heaven proclaimed him to be the Son of GOD, and one in whom the Father was well pleased; and the same ointment, that was cast upon the head of our High Priest, went unto his beard, and thence fell to the borders of his garment; for as CHRIST our Head felt these effects in manifestation, so the Church believes GOD does to her, and to her meanest children in the suscepcion of the holy rite of Baptism in right, apt, and holy dispositions. For the Heavens open too upon us, and the holy Ghost descends to sanctifie the waters, and to hallow the Catechumens, and to pardon the passed and repented sins, and to consign him to the inheritance of sons, and to put on his military girdle, and give him the Sacrament and oath of fidelity; for all this is understood to be meant by those frequent expressions of Scripture, calling baptism *the laver of regeneration, illumination, a washing away the filth of the flesh, and the answer of a good conscience, a being buried with Christ*, and many others of the like purpose and signification. But we may also learn hence sacredly to esteem the rites of Religion, which he first sanctified by his own personal suscepcion, and then made necessary by his own institution and command, and GOD hath made to be conveyances of blessing and ministeries of the holy Spirit.

Ephes. 5. 2. Hebr. 10. 2. 1 Pet. 3. 21. Rom. 6. 4.

The holy Ghost descended upon JESUS in the symbole or visible representation of a Dove, whose proprieties of nature are pretty and modest Hieroglyphicks of the duty of spiritual persons, which are thus observed in both Philosophies; the Dove sings not but mourns, it hath no gall, strikes not with its bill, hath no crooked talons, and forgets its young ones soonest.

3.

* 1 Cor. 10. 1, 2, 3. Gal. 3. 14. 27. 1 Pet. 3. 21. 1 Cor. 12. 7. 13. Matth. 3. 2. 6.

4.

5.

soonest of any the inhabitants of the air ; and the effects of the holy Spirit are symbolical in all the sons of sanctification. For the voice of the Church is sad in those accents, which expresse her own condition ; but as the Dove is not so sad in her breast, as in her note : so neither is the interiour condition of the Church wretched and miserable , but indeed her song is most of it Elegy within her own walls, and her condition looks sad, and her joyes are no pleasures in the publike estimate , but they , that afflict her, think her miserable , because they know not the sweetneses of a holy peace and serenity , which supports her spirit , and plains the heart under a rugged brow, naking the soul festivall under the noise of a Threne and sadder groanings. But the Sons of consolation are also taught their duty by this apparition : for upon whomsoever the Spirit descends, he teaches him to be meek and charitable, neither offending by the violence of hands, or looser language. For the Dove is inoffensive in beak, and foot, and feels no disturbance and violence of passions when its dearest interests are destroyed, that we also may be of an even Spirit in the saddest accidents, which usually discompose our peace ; and however , such symbolical inimations, receive their efficacy from the Fancy of the contriver, yet here, whether this apparition did intend any such morall representation , or no, it is certain that where ever the Holy Spirit does dwell, there also Peace and Sanctity, Meeknesse and Charity, a mortified will, and an active dereliction of our desires do inhabite.

6

Ecclus. 2. 1.

No sooner had the voice of God pronounced Jesus to be the welbeloved Son of God, but the Devil thought it of great concernment to attempt him withall his malice and his art ; and that is the condition of all those, whom Gods grace hath separated from the common expectations and societies of the world ; and therefore the Son of Sirach gave good advices, *My Son, if thou come to serve the Lord, prepare thy Soul for temptation ;* for not onely the Spirits of darknesse are exasperated at the declension of their own kingdom, but also the nature and constitution of vertues , and eminent graces, which holy persons exercise in their lives, is such as to be easily assailable by their contraries, apt to be lessened by time, to be interrupted by wearinesse, to grow flat and insipid by tediousnesse of labour, to be omitted and grow infrequent by the impertinent diversions of society and secular occasions ; so that to rescind the ligaments of vice, made firm by nature and evil habits, to acquire every new degree of vertue , to continue the holy fires of zeal in their just proportion, to overcome the Devil , and to reject the invitations of the world, and the softer embraces of the flesh, which are the proper inmployment of the sons of God, is a perpetuall difficulty , and every possibility of prevaricating the strictnesses of a duty is a temptation, and an insecurity to them who have begun to serve God in hard battles.

7

The Holy Spirit did drive J E S U S into the wildernesse to be tempted by the Devil ; and though we are bound to pray instantly, that we fall in no temptation, yet if by divine permission, or by an inspiration of the Holy Spirit we be engaged in an action or course of life that is full of temptation, and empty of comfort, let us apprehend it as an issue of Divine Providence, as an occasion of the rewards of diligence and Patience , as an instrument of vertue, as a designation of that way, in which we most glorifie GOD, but no argument of disfavour, since our Dearest LORD, the

the most Holy JESUS, who could have driven the Devil away by the breath of his mouth yet was by the Spirit of his Father, permitted to a triall and molestation by the spirits of Darknesse. And this is S. James counsell, *James 1.2.* *My Brethren, count it all joy, when ye enter into divers temptations, knowing that the triall of your faith worketh Patience.* So far is a Blessing, when the Spirit is the instrument of our motion, and brings us to the triall of our Faith: but if the Spirit leaves us and delivers us over to the Devil, not to be tempted, but to be abused and ruined, it is a sad condition, and the greatest instance of their infelicity, whom the Church upon sufficient reason and with competent authority delivers over to Satan, by the infliction of the Greater Excommunication.

As soon as it was permitted to the Devil to tempt our Lord, he, like fire, had no power to suspend his act, but was as intirely determined by the fullnesse of his malice, as a naturall agent by the appetites of nature, that we may know, to whom we owe the happinesse of all those hours and dayes of peace, in which we sit under the trees of Paradise, and see no serpent encircling the branches, and presenting us with fair fruit to ruin us. It is the mercy of God, we have the quietnesse of a minute, for if the Devils chain were taken off, he would make our very beds a torment, our tables to be a snare, our sleeps phantastick, lustfull and illusive, and every sense should have an object of delight and danger, an Hyana to kisse, and to perish in its embraces. But the Holy JESUS having been assaulted by the Devil, and felt his malice by the experiments of humanity, is become so mercifull a high Priest and so sensible of our sufferings and danger, by the apprehensions of compassion, that he hath put a hook into the nostrils of Leviathan, and although the reliques of seven nations be in our borders and fringes of our Countrey, yet we live as safe as did the Israelites, upon whom sometimes an inroad and invasion was made, and sometimes they had rest fourty yeeres, and when the storm came, some remedy was found out, by his grace, by whose permission the tempest was stirred up; and we find many persons, who in seven yeeres meet not with a violent temptation to a crime; but their battels are against impediments and retardations of improvement: their own rights are not directly questioned, but the Devil and sin are wholly upon the defensive. Our duty here is an act of affection to God, making returns of thanks for the protection; and of duty to secure and continue the favour.

But the design of the Holy Ghost being to expose JESUS to the temptation, he arms himself with fasting and prayer against the day of battle, he continues in the wilderness fourty dayes and fourty nights without meat or drink, attending to the immediate addresses and colloquies with God, not suffering the interruption of meales, but representing his own, and the necessities of all mankind with affections and instances of spirit, love and wisdom, as might expresse the excellency of his person and promote the work of our redemption, his conversation being in this intervall, but a resemblance of Angelicall perfection; and his fasts not an instrument of mortification, for he needed none, he had contracted no stain from his own, nor his Parents acts, neither do we finde, that he was at all hungry, or afflicted with his abstinence, till after the expiration of the fourty dayes. *He was afterwards an hungry* (said the Evange-

Evangelist,) and his abstinence from meat might be a defecation of his faculties, and an opportunity of Prayer, but we are not sure it intended any thing else: but it may concern the prudence of religion to snatch at this occasion of duty, so far as the instance is imitable; and in all violences of temptation to fast and pray, Prayer being a rare antidote against the poison, and *Fasting* a convenient disposition to intense, actual, and undisturbed prayer.

10

The Devils *first* temptation of Christ was upon the instances and first necessities of nature, Christ was hungry and the Devil invited him to break his fast upon the expense of a miracle, by turning the stones into bread. But the answer JESUS made, was such as taught us, since the *ordinary* providence of God is sufficient for our provision or support, *extraordinary* wayes of satisfying necessities are not to be undertaken, but God must be relied upon, his time attended, his manner ascertained, and his measure thankfully received. JESUS refused to be relieved, and denied to manifest the Divinity of his person rather then he would do an act, which had in it the intimation of a diffident spirit, or might be expounded a disreputation to Gods Providence. And therefore it is an improvident care, and impious security to take evill courses, and use vile instruments to furnish our Table, and provide for our necessities. God will certainly give us bread, and till he does, we can live by the breath of his mouth, by the word of God, by the light of his countenance, by the refreshment of his promises; for if God gives not provisions into our granaries, he can feed us out of his own, that is, out of the repositories of charity. If the flesh possible removed, he can also alter the appetite, and when our stock is spent, he can also lessen the necessity: or if that continues, he can drown the sense of it, in a deluge of patience and resignation. Every word of Gods mouth can create a grace, and every grace can supply two necessities, both of the body and the spirit, by the comforts of *this*, to support *that*, that they may bear each others burden and alleviate the pressure.

11

But the Devil is *always* prompting us to change our stones into bread, our sadnesses into sensual comfort, our drynesses into inundations of fancy and exterior sweetnesses: for he knows that the ascetick Tables of Mortification, and the stones of the Desert are more healthfull, then the fullness of voluptuousness, and the corn of the valleys. He cannot endure we should live a life of austerity or self Deniall: if he can get us but to satisfy our senses, and a little more freely to please our naturall desires, he then hath a *fair field* for the battle; but so long as we force him to fight in hedges and morasses, encircling and crowding up his strengths into disadvantages, by our stone walls our hardneses of Discipline and rudeneses of Mortification, we can with more facilities repell his flatteries and receive fewer incommodities of spirit: but thus the Devill will abuse us by the impotency of our naturall desires, and therefore let us go to God for satisfaction of our wishes; God can and does, when it is good for us change our stones into bread: for he is a Father somewhat full, that if we ask him a Fish, he will not give us a Scorpion: if we ask him bread, he will not offer us a stone; but will satisfy all our desires by ministrations of the spirit, making stones to become our meat, and teares our drink; which, although they are unpleasant, and harsh to naturall appetites, yet by the operation and influences of Gods

GODS holy Spirit, they are made instruments of health, and life, and salvation.

The Devil, perceiving JESUS to be a person of greater eminency and perfection then to be moved by sensual and low desires, makes a *second* assault by a temptation something more spiritual, and tempts him to presumption and indiscreet confidence, to a throwing himself down from the pinnacles of the Temple, upon the stock of Predestination, that GOD might secure him by the ministry of Angels, and so prove his being the Son of GOD. And indeed it is usual with the Devil, when severe persons have so much mortified their lower appetites, that they are not easily overcome by an invitation of carnality or intemperance, to stir them to opinions of their own sanctity, and make their *first escaping* prove their *second and greater dangers*. But that the Devil should persuade JESUS to throw himself down, because he was the Son of GOD, was an invitation to no purpose, save onely that it gave occasion to this truth, that GODS providence secures all his sons in the wayes of Nature, and while they are doing their duty; but loves not to be tempted to acts unreasonable and unnecessary. *Heron*, an inhabitant of the Desert, suffered the same temptation and was overcome by it, for he died with his fall, sinfully and ingloriously. For the caresses of GODS love to his saints and servants are security against all, but themselves. The Devil and all the World offer to do them mischief, but then they shall be safe, because they are innocent; if they once offer to do the same to themselves, they lose their protection because they lost their prudence and their charity. But here also it will concern all those, who by their eminent employment and greater ministries in Ecclesiasticals are set upon the pinnacle of the Temple, to take care that the Devil tempt not them to a precipice; a fall from so great a height will break the bones in pieces: and yet there also the station is least firm, the posture most uneasy, the prospect vertiginous, and the Devil busy and desirous to thrust us headlong.

S. Hierome here observes well, the Devil intending mischief to our blessed SAVIOUR invited him to cast himself down. He may persuade us to fall, but cannot precipitate us without our own act. And it is an infinite mercy in GOD, that the Devil, who is of malice infinite, is of so restrain'd and limited a power, that he can do us no ghostly disadvantage, but by persuading us to do it our selves. And then it will be a strange imprudence to lay violent and unreasonable hands upon our selves, and do that mischief, which our strongest and most malicious Adversary cannot, or to be invited by the onely Rhetorick of a Dogs barking to come near him, to unrye his chains, to unloose his muzzle for no other end, but that we may be bitten. Just such a fool is every person that consents to the temptations of the Devil.

By this time the Devil began to perceive that this was the Son of GOD, and designed to be the King of all the World, and therefore resolved for the last assault to proffer him the Kingdoms of the World; thinking ambition more likely to ruine him, because he knew it was that, which prevailed upon himself, and all those fallen stars, the Angels of Darknesse. That the Devil told a lye it is most likely, when he said, he had power to dispose the Kingdoms of the World; for originally and by proper inherent right GOD alone disposes all governments; but it is also certain, that the Devil is a person

12.

13.

S. Hieron. in 4. cap. Mat.

14.

a person capable of a delegate employment in some great mutation of States, and many probabilities have been observed by wise personages, perswading that the *Grandeur* of the Roman Empire was in the degrees of increment and decrement permitted to the power and managing of the Devil, that the greatness of that government being in all appearance full of advantage to Satans kingdom, and employed for the dis-improvement of the weak beginnings and improbable increase of Christianity, might give lustre and demonstration to it that it came from GOD, since the great permissions of power made to the Devil, and acted with all art and malice in defiance of the religion, could produce no other effect upon it, but that it made it grow greater; and the greatness was made more miraculous, since the Devil when his chain was off, fain would, but could not suppress it.

15.

The Lamb of GOD, that heard him with patience tempt him to do himself a mischief, and to throw himself headlong, could by no means endure it, when he tempted to a direct dishonouring GOD; our own injuries are opportunities of patience; but when the glory of GOD and his immediate honour is the question, then is the occasion and precise minute for the flames of a clear shining and unconsuming zeal. But the care of GODS glory had so filled and employed all the faculties of JESUS, that it takes no notice of the offer; and it were well also that we had fewer opinions of the lustre of worldly dignities, or at least that we in imitation of our blessed Master should refuse to accept all the World when it is to be bought of the Devil at the expence of a deadly sin. For that government cannot be very honourable, that makes us slaves to the worst of Tyrants; and all those Princes and great personages who by injury and usurpation possess and invade others rights, would do well to consider, that a Kingdom is too dearly paid for, if the condition be first to worship the Devil.

16.

When the Devil could do no good, he departed for a time. If he could ever have spied a time of returning he wanted nor will nor malice to observe and use it, and although JESUS was a person without danger, yet I doubt not but the holy Ghost described that circumstance, that we should not have the securities of a deep peace, when we have had the success of conquests; for a surprize is most full of horror and of more certain ruine; so that we have no security, but a perpetual observation; that, together with the grace of GOD, (who takes care of all his servants, and will drive away the Tempter, when he pleases, and help us alwayes when we need) is as great argument for our confidence and encouragement to our prayers and address to GOD, as it is safety to our person, and honour to our victory. And let us account it our honour, that the trials of temptation, which is the greatest sadness of our condition, is hallowed by the temptation of JESUS, and our condition assured by his assistances, and the assistances procured by our prayers, most easily upon the advantage of his sufferings and compassion.

The

The PRAYER.

O Holy JESUS, who didst fulfil all righteousness, and didst live a life of evenness, and obedience and community, submitting thy self to all rites and sanctions of divine ordinance, give me grace to live in the fellowship of thy holy Church, a life of piety, and without singularity, receiving the sweet influence of thy Sacraments and rites, and living in the purities and innocencies of my first Sanctification. I adore thy godhead infinite, that thou hast been pleased to wash my soul in the laver of Regeneration, that thou hast consign'd me to the participation of thy favours by the holy Eucharist; let me not return to the infirmities of the old Man, whom thou hast crucified on thy crosse, and who was buried with thee in Baptisme, nor renew the crimes of my sinful years, which were so many recessions from baptismal purities, but let me ever receive the emissions of thy Divine Spirit, and be a Son of GOD, a partner of thine immortal inheritance; and when thou seest it needful, I may receive testimony from heaven, that I am thy servant, and thy childe; and grant that I may so walk, that I neither disrepute the honour of the Christian institution, nor stain the whitenesses of that innocence, which thou didst invest my soul withal, when I put on the Baptismal Robe, nor break my holy vow, nor lose my right of inheritance, which thou hast given me by promise and grace, but that thou mayest live me, with the love of a Father, and a Brother, and a Husband, and a Lord, and I serve thee in the communion of Saints, in the susception of Sacraments, in the actions of a holy life, and in a never-failing love, or interrupted Devotion; to the glory of thy Name, and the promotion of all those ends of Religion, which thou hast designed in the excellent Oeconomy of Christianity. Grant this holy JESUS for thy mercies sake, and for the honour of thy Name, which is and shall be adored for ever and ever. Amen.

Discourse V.

Of TEMPTATION.

GOD, who is the Fountain of good, did choose rather to bring good out of evil, than not to suffer any evil to be; not only because variety of accidents and natures do better entertain our affections, and move our spirits, who are transported and suffer great impressions by a circumstance, by the very opposition and accidental lustre and eminency of contraries, but also that the glory of the Divine Providence in turning the nature of things into the designs of GOD might be illustrious, and that we may in a mixt condition have more observation, and after our danger and our labour may obtain a greater reward; for Temptation is the opportunity of Vertue and a Crown; GOD having disposed us in such a condition, that our virtues must be difficult, our inclinations averse and corrigible, our avocations many, our humilities bitter, our dangers proportionable, that our labour might be great, our inclinations suppressed and corrected, our intentions be made actu-

Erras mi frater,
erras si putas un-
quam Christiani-
tatem non pati
Tunc maxime
oppugnaris, si
te oppugnari
nescis. S. Hier.
ad Helioid.

all, our enemies be resisted, and our dangers passe into security and honour, after a contestation, and a victory, and a perseverance. It is every Mans case; trouble is as certainly the lot of our nature and inheritance, and we are so sure to be tempted, that in the deepest peace and silence of spirit oftentimes is our greatest danger; *not to be tempted* is oftentimes our most subtle temptation. It is certain then, we cannot be secure when our security is our enemy; but therefore we must do as GOD himself does, make the best of it, and not to be sad at that, which is the publick portion and the case of all Men, but to order it according to the intention, place it in the eye of verue, that al its actions & motions may tend thicher, there to be chang'd into felicities. But certain it is, unlesse we first be cut and hewen in the mountains, we shall not be fixed in the Temple of GOD; but by incision and contusions our roughnesses may become plain, or our sparks kindled, and we may be either for the Temple, or the Altar, spiritual building, or holy fire, something that GOD shall delight in, and then the temptation was not amisse.

2.

And therefore we must not wonder, that oftentimes it so happens, that nothing will remove a temptation, no diligence, no advices, no labour, no prayers; not because these are ineffectual, but because it is must fit the temptation should abide, for ends of GODS designing; and although Saint *Paul* was a person, whose prayers were likely to be prevalent, and his industry of much prudence and efficacy toward the drawing out of his thorne, yet GOD would not do it, but continued his war, onely promising to send him succour, *My grace is sufficient for thee*; meaning he should have an enemy to try his spirit and improve it, and he should also have GODS grace to comfort and support it, but as without GODS grace the Enemy would spoil him, so without an Enemy GODS grace would never swell up into glory and crown him. For the caresses of a pleasant Fortune are apt to swell into extravagancies of spirit, and burst into the dissolution of manners; an unmixt joy is dangerous; but if in our fairest flowers we spie a Locust, or feel the uneasiness of a Sackcloth under our fine linen, or our purple be tyed with an uneven and a rude cord; any little trouble, but to correct our wildnesses, though it be but a Deaths-head served up at our feasts, it will make our tables fuller of health, and freer from snare, it will allay our spirits, making them to retire from the weakness of dispersion, to the union and strength of a sober recollection.

3.

Since therefore it is no part of our imployment or our care to be free from al the attempts of an enemy, but to be safe in despite of his hostility, it now will concern us to inform our selves of the state of the war in general, and then to make provisions and to put on armour accordingly.

4.
* Serm. de
zele.

1. S. * *Cyprian* often observes, and makes much of the discourse, that the Devil when he intends a battery, first views the strengths and situation of the place; His sense drawn out of the cloud of an allegory is this, The Devil first considers the constitution and temper of the person he is to tempt, and where he observes his natural inclination apt for a vice, he presents him with objects and opportunity, and arguments fitting to his captive disposition; from which he is likely to receive the smaller opposition, since there is a party within, that desires his intermission. Thus to lustfull natures he represents the softer whispers of the spirit of fornication. To the angry and revengeful he offers to consideration the satisfactions and content

of a full revenge, and the emissions of anger: To the envious he makes Pa-
negyrics of our rivals, and swells our fancies to opinion, our opinion to self-
love, self-love to arrogance, and these are supported by contempt of others,
and all determine upon envy, and expire in malice. Now in these cases, when
our natures are captive and unhandsonie, it were good we were conscious of
our own weaknesses, and by special arts and strengths of mortification for-
tifie that part, where we are apt and exposed to danger; we are sure enough
to meet a storm there, and we also are likely to perish in it, unless we cor-
rect those averfenesses and natural indispositions, and reduce them to the
evennesses of virtue, or the affections and moderation of a good nature:
Let us be sure that the Devil take not a helve from our own branches to fit
his ax, that so he may cut the tree down; and certainly he that does vio-
lence to his nature will not be easie to the entertainment of affections pre-
ternatural and violent.

2. But the Devil also observes all our exterior accidents, occasions
and opportunities of action; he sees what company we keep, he observes
what degrees of love we have to our Wives, what loosenesse of affection to-
wards children, how prevalent their persuasions, how inconvenient their
discourses, how trifling their interests, and to what degrees of determination
they move us by their importunity or their power. The Devil tempted *Ad-
am* by his wife, because he saw his affections too plyant, and encircling her
with the entertainment of fondness, joy, wonder, and amorous fancy; it was
her hand that made the fruit beauteous to *Adam*, she saw it fair of it self, and
so she eat; but *Adam* was not moved by that argument, but the *Woman* gave it
me and I did eat: she gave vivacity to the temptation, and efficacy to the ar-
gument. And the severity of the Mans understanding would have given a
reasonable answer to the insinuations of the Serpent, that was an ugly beast,
and his arguments not being of themselves convincing to a wise person, ei-
ther must put on advantages of a fair insinuation and representment, or they
are return'd with scorn; but when the beauteous hands of his young Virgin
Mistress became the Oratours, the temptation was an *amorevolezza*, he kisses
the presenter and hugs the ruine. Here therefore it is our safest course to
make a retrenchment of all those excrecencies of affections, which like
wilde and irregular succours, draw away nourishment from the Trunk, mak-
ing it as sterile as it self is unprofitable; as we must restrain the inclinati-
ons of nature, so also of society and relation, when they become inconveni-
ent, and let nothing of our family be so adopted or naturalized into our
affections, as to create with in us a new concupiscence, and a second time
spoil our nature; what God intended to us for a help, let not our fondnesses
convert into a snare, and he, that is not ready to deny the importunities,
and to reject the interests of a Wife or childe or Friend, when the question
is for God, deserves to misse the comforts of a good, and to feel the troubles
of an imperious woman.

We also have ends and designs of our own; some great purpose, upon
which the greatest part of our life turns; It may be, we are to raise a fa-
mily, to recover a sunk estate, or else ambition, honour, or a great employ-
ment is the great hinge of all our greater actions. And some men are
apt to make hast to be rich, or are to passe through a great many difficul-
ties to be honourable; and here the Devill will swell the hopes,
and obstruct the passages; he will heighten the desire, and multiply

5:

Habet n. volup-
tatem quandam
ad ronicio ux-
oria, quum pluri-
num a retur
quod consule.
S. Chrysost.

6:

the businesse of access, making the concupiscence more impatient, and yet the way to the purchase of our purposes so full of employment and variety, that both the implacable desire and the multitude of changes and transactions may increase the danger, and multiply the sin. For when the Enemy hath observed our ends, he makes his tentations to reflect from that angle which is direct upon them, provoking to malice and impatience against whomsoever we find standing in our way, whether willingly or by accident; then follow naturally all those sins, which are instrumental to removing the impediments, to facilitating the passage, to endearing our friends, to procuring more confidants, to securing our hopes, and entering upon possession. Simon Magus had a desire to be accounted *some great one*, and by that purpose, he was tempted to sorcery and divination, and with a new object he brought a new sin into the world, adding simonie to his sorcery, and taught posterity that crime, which till then had neither *name nor being*. And those Ecclesiasticks, who violently affect rich or pompous Prelacies, pollute themselves with wordly arts, growing covetous as Syrian Merchants, ambitious as the Levantine Princes, factious as the people, revengefull as jealousy, and proud as conquerours and usurpers, and by this means beasts are brought into the Temple, and the Temple it self is exposed to sale, and the holy rites aswell as the beasts of Sacrifice are made venall; To prevent the infinite inconveniencies, that thrust themselves into the common and great roades of our life, the best course is to cut our great channell into little rivulets, making our ends the more, that we may be indifferent to any, proposing *nothing great*, that our desires may be *little*, for so we shall be better able to digest the troubles of an Enemy, the contradictions of an unhandsome accident, the crossing of our hopes; because our desires are even, and our ends are lesse considerable, and we can with much readinesse divert upon another purpose, having another ready with the same proportion to our hopes and desires as the first. Thus if we propound to our selves an honest employment, or a quiet retirement, a work of charity abroad, or of devotion at home, if we misse in our first setting forth, we return to shoar, where we can negotiate with content, it being alike to us, either to traffick abroad with more gain, or trade at home with more safety; but when we once grow great in our desires, fixing too earnestly upon one object, we either grow impatient as *Rachel*. (Give me children, or I dye) or take ill courses and use unlawfull means (as *Thamar*, choosing rather to lie with her Father, than to die without issue) or else are miserable in the losse and frustration of our hopes (like the Women of Ramah, who would not be comforted :) Let therefore our life be moderate, our desires reasonable, our hopes little, our ends none in eminency and prelation above others; for as the rayes of light passing through the thin air, end in a small and undiscerned Pyramis; but reflected upon a wall are doubled and increase the warmth to a scorching and troublesome heat: So the desires of Man, if they passe through an even, and an indifferent life towards the issues of an ordinary and necessary course, they are little, and within command; but if they passe upon an end or aim of difficulty or ambition, they duplicate and grow to a disturbance; and we have seen the even and temperate lives of indifferent persons continue in many degrees of innocence; but the temptations of busie designs is too great even for the best dispositions. But

*Fin tempera-
tam Dii quoq;
provehunt
In majus: ijdem
ed: re vires
Omne nefas a-
tino moventes.*

But these temptations are crasse and material, and soon discernable; it will require some greater observation to arm against such as are more spiritual and immaterial. For he hath apples to cozen children, and gold for Men, the Kingdoms of the World for the ambition of Princes, and the vanities of the World for the intemperate: he hath discourses, and fair spoken principles, to abuse the pretenders to reason, and he hath common prejudices for the more vulgar understandings. Amongst these I chose to consider such as are by way of principle or proposition.

1. The first great principle of temptation, I shall note, is a generall mistake, which excules very many of our crimes upon pretence of *infirmity*; calling all these sins, to which by natural disposition we are inclined (though by carelesse and evil customes, they are heightened to a habit,) by the name of *sins of infirmity*: to which Men suppose they have reason and title to pretend, If, when they have committed a crime, their conscience checks them, and they are troubled, and, during the interval and abatement of the heats of desire, resolve against it, and commit it readily at the next opportunity; then they cry out against the weaknesse of their nature; and think, as long as *this body of death* is about them, it must be thus; and that this condition may stand with the state of Grace: And then the sinnes shall return periodically, like the revolutions of a Quartan Ague, well and ill for ever, till Death surprizes the mistaker. This is a Patron of sins, and makes the temptation prevalent by an authentick instrument; and they pretend the words of S. Paul: *For the good that I would, that I do not; but the evil that I would not, that I do: For there is a law in my members rebelling against the law of my minde, bringing me into captivity to the law of sin.* And thus the state of sinne is mistaken for a state of Grace, and the imperfections of the Law are miscalled the affections and necessities of Nature, that they might seem to be incurable, and the persons apt for an excuse, therefore, because for nature there is no absolute cure. But that these words of S. Paul may not become a savour of death, and instruments of a temptation to us, it is observable, that the Apostle by a fiction of person (as is usual * with him) speaks of himself not as in the state of Regeneration, under the Gospel, but under the difficulties, obscurities, insufficiencies, and imperfections of the Law, which indeed he there contends to have been a rule good, and holy, apt to remonstrate our misery, because by its prohibitions, & limits given to natural desires, it made actions (before indifferent) now to be sins; it added many curses to the breakers of it; and by an efficacy of contrariety it made us more desirous of what was now unlawful: but it was a covenant in which our nature was restrained, but not helped; it was provoked, but not sweetly assisted; our understandings were instructed, but our wils not sanctified, and there were no suppletories of repentance; every greater sin was like the fall of an Angel, irreparable by any mystery, or expresse recorded or enjoyned: Now of a Man under this Covenant he describes the condition to be such, that he understands his duty, but by the infirmities of Nature he is certain to fall, and by the helps of the Law not strengthened against it, nor restored after it, and therefore he calls himself under that notion, *a miserable man sold under sin*, not doing according to the rules of the Law or the dictates of his reason, but by the unaltered misery of his nature, certain to prevaricate. But the person described here is not S. Paul, is not any justified person,

7.

8.

Rom. 7. 15.

* Ut videre
est. Rom. 3. 7.
Gal. 2. 18.1 Cor. 6. 12. &
10. 23. 29. 30.
& 13. 2.

not so much as a Christian, but one who is under a state of direct opposition to the state of grace, as will manifestly appear if we observe the antithesis from S. Pauls own characters; for the Man here named is such, as in whom *sin wrought all concupiscence, in whom sin lived, and slew him*, (so that he was dead in trespasses and sins) and although he did delight in the law after his inward man, that is, his understanding had intellectual complacencies, and satisfactions, which afterwards he calls *-serving the law of God with his minde* (that is, in the first dispositions and preparations of his spirit) yet he could act nothing. For the law in his members did enslave him, and brought him into captivity to the law of sin; so that this person was full of actual and effective lusts, he was a slave to sin and dead in trespasses: But the state of a regenerate person is such, as to have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts, in whom *sin did not reign*, not onely in the minde, but even also not in the mortal body; over whom *sin had no dominion*, in whom the old man was crucified, and the body of sin was destroyed, and sin not at all served. And to make the antithesis yet clearer, in the very beginning of the next Chapter the Apostle saith, that the spirit of life in Christ Jesus had made him free from the law of sin and death: under which law he complained immediately before, he was sold, and killed, to shew the person was not the same in these so different and contradictory representations. No Man in the state of grace can say, *I be evil that I would not that I do*; if by evil he means any evil that is habitual, or in its own nature deadly.

9.

So that now let no Man pretend an inevitable necessity to sin; for if ever it comes to a custome, or to a great violation, though but in a single act, it is a condition of carnality, not of spiritual life; and those are not the infirmities Of nature, but the weaknesses of grace that make us sin so frequently, which the Apostle truly affirms to the same purpose; *The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; these are contrary the one to the other, so that [ye cannot] or [that ye * do not do] the things that ye would*. This disability proceeds from the strength of the flesh, and weakness of the spirit: For he adds, *But if ye be led by the spirit, ye are not under the law*: saying plainly, that the state of such a combate, and disability of doing good, is a state of a Man under the law, or in the flesh, which he accounts all one: but every Man that is sanctified under the Gospel, is, *led by the spirit, and walks in the spirit, and brings forth the fruits of the spirit*. It is not our excuse, but the aggravation of our sin, that we fall again in despite of so many resolutions to the contrary: And let us not flatter our selves into a confidence of sin, by supposing the state of grace can stand with the custome of any sin: For it is the state, either of an *animalis homo* (as the Apostle calls him) that is, a Man in pure naturals without the clarity of divine revelations, who cannot perceive or understand the things of God; or else of the carnal man, that is, a person, who though in his minde he is convinced, yet he is not yet freed from the dominion of sin; but only hath his eyes opened, but not his bonds loosed. For by the perpetual analogy and frequent expressees in Scripture, the spiritual person, or the Man redeemed by the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, is free from the Law and the Dominion, & the Kingdom, & the Power of all sin. *For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace*.

Gal. 5. 17.

* *ita per spiritum*.

Rom. 7. 14.

Rom. 8. 6.

10.

But sins of infirmity in true sense of Scripture signifie nothing, but the sins of an unholy and an un sanctified nature; when they are taken for actions done against the strength of resolution out of the strength of natural appetite

petite and violence of desire : and therefore in scripture the state of Sin, and the state of infirmity is all one. *For, when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the * ungodly* (saith the Apostles) the condition in which we were, when Christ became a sacrifice for us, was certainly a condition of sin and enmity with God, and yet this he calls a being *without strength*, or in a state of weaknesse and infirmity ; which we, who beleeve all our strength to be derived from Christs death, and the assistance of the Holy Spirit, the fruit of his ascension, may soon apprehend to be the true meaning of the word. And in this sense is that saying of our Blessed SAVIOUR, *The whole have no need of a Physician but they that are weak* : for therefore Christ came into the world to save sinners : those are the persons of Christs infirmity, whose restitution and reduction to a state of life and health was his great designe. So that whoever sin habitually, that is, constantly, periodically, at the revolution of a temptation, or frequently, or easily, are persons who still remain in the state of sin and death. And their intervalls of piety are but preparations to a state of grace, which they may then be, when they are not used to countenance or excuse the sin or to flatter the person. But if the intermediate resolutions of emendation (though they never run beyond the next assault of passion or desire) be taken for a state of grace blended with infirmities of nature, they become destructive of all those purposes through our mistake, which they might have promoted, if they had been rightly understood, observed and cherished. Sometimes indeed the greatnesse of a temptation may become an instrument to excuse some degrees of the sin, and make the man pityable, whose ruin seemes almost certain because of the greatnesse and violence of the enemy, meeting with a naturall aptnesse ; but then the question will be whether and to what actions that strong temptation carries him ? whither to a work of a mortall nature, or onely to a small irregularity ? that is, whither to death, or to a wound ? for what ever the principle be, if the effect be death, the mans case was therefore to be pityed, because his ruin was the more inevitable ; not so pityed, as to excuse him from the state of death. For let the temptation be never so strong, every Christian man hath assistances sufficient to support him, so as that without his own yeelding, no temptation is stronger then that grace which God offers him : for if it were, it were not so much as a sin of infirmity ; it were no sin at all. This therefore must be certain to us ; when the violence of our passions, or desires overcomes our resolutions, and fairer purposes against the dictate of our reason, that indeed is a state of infirmity, but it is also of sin and death, a state of immortification ; because the offices of grace are to crucifie the old man, that is, our former, and impurer conversation ; to subdue the petulancy of our passions, to reduce them to reason, and to restore Empire and dominion to the superiour faculties. So that this condition in proper speaking is not so good as the infirmity of grace, but it is no grace at all : for who ever are Christs, have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts, those other imperfect ineffective resolutions are but the first approaches of the kingdom of Christ nothing but the clarities of lightning, dark as soon as light ; and they therefore cannot be excuses to us because the contrary weaknesses, (as we call them) do not make the sin involuntary, but chosen and pursued, and in true speaking is the strength of the lust, not the infirmity of a state of grace.

Rom. 5. 6.

*Gratia ipsius adde-
bat, lumen uni-
co, without
strength, that
is, ungodly.*

Vide August.
l. 1. c. 17. de pec-
catorum meritis.
& Enchir. 81.

Gal. 5. 24.

11.

S August. lib. de
gratia & liber:
arbit. c. 17.
& c. 29.

But yet there is a condition of grace, which is a state of little and imperfect ones, such as are called in Scripture, *Smoking flax and bruised reeds*; which is a state of the first dawning of the Sun of righteousness, when the lights of grace new rise upon our eyes; and then indeed they are weak and have a more dangerous neighbourhood of temptations and desires, but they are not subdued by them: they sin not by direct election, their actions criminal are but like the slime of Nilus, leaving rats half formed, they sin but *seldom*, and when they do, it is in *small instances*, and then also by *surprise*, by *inadvertency*, and interrupt their own acts and lessen them perpetually; and never do an act of sinfulness, but the principle is such as makes it to be *involuntary* in many degrees. For when the understanding is clear, and the dictate of reason undisturbed, and determinate, whatsoever then produces an irregular action excuses not, because the action is not made the less voluntary by it, for the action is not made involuntary from any other principle but from some defect of understanding either in act or habit, or faculty. For where there is no such defect, there is a full deliberation according to the capacity of the man, and then the act of election that follows is clear, and full; and is that proper disposition which makes him truly capable of punishment, or reward respectively. Now although in the first beginnings of grace there is not a direct ignorance to excuse totally, yet because a sudden surprise or an inadvertency is not alwayes in our power to prevent, these things do lessen the election & freedom of the action, & then because they are but seldom, and never proceed to any length of time, or any great instances of crime, and are every day made still more infrequent, because grace growing stronger, the observation and advertency of the Spirit, and the attendance of the inner man grows more effectual and busy, this is a state of the imperfection of grace, but a state of grace it is. And it is more commonly observed to be expressed in the imperfection of our good actions, than in the irregularity of bad actions: and in this sense are those words of our Blessed SAUIOVR: *The Spirit truly is willing, but the flesh is weak*; which in this instance was not expressed in sin, but in a naturall imperfection, which then was a recession from a civility, a not watching with the Lord. And such as this is the *only infirmity* that can consist with the state of grace.

12.

So that now we may lay what load we please upon our nature, and call our violent and unmortified desires by the name of an imperfect grace; but then we are dangerously mistaken & flatter our selves into an opinion of piety, when we are in the gall of bitterness; so making our misery the more certain and irremediable, because we think it needs nothing but a perpetuity and perseverance to bring us to heaven. The violence of passion and desires is a misery of nature, but a perfect principle of sin; multiplying, and repeating the acts, but not lessening the malignity: But sins of infirmity, when we mean sins of a lesse and lower malice are sins of a lesse and imperfect choyce, because of the unavoideable imperfection of the understanding. Sins of infirmity are alwayes infirme sins, that is, weak and imperfect in their principle, and in their nature and in their designe; that is, they are actions incomplete in all their capacities; but then passions and periodical inclinations consilting with a regular and determined and actual understanding must never be their principles; for whatsoever proceeds thence is destructive of spirituall life, and inconsistent with the state of Grace. But sins of infirmity, when they pretend to a lesse degree of malignity, and a greater degree

degree of excuse, are such as are little more then sins of pure and inculpable ignorance; for in that degree, in which any other principle is mixt with them, in the same degree they are criminall and inexcusable. For as a sin of infirmity is pretended to be little in its value and malignity: so it is certain, if it be great in the instance, it is not a sin of infirmity, that is, it is a state or act of death, and absolutely inconsistent with the state of grace.

2. Another principle of temptation pregnant with sin, and fruitfull of monst'rs is a weaker pretence, which lesse wary and credulous persons abuse themselves withall, pretending as a ground for their confidence and incorrigible pursuance of their courses; that they have a good meaning, that they intend sometimes well, and sometimes not ill: and this shall be sufficient to sanctifie their actions and to hallow their sin. And this is of worse malice, when religion is the colour for a war, and the preservation of faith made the warrant for destruction of charity, and a zeal for GOD made the false light to lead us to disobedience to Man, and hatred of idolatry is the huiſher of sacriledge, and the defiance of superstition the introducer of prophaneſſe, and reformation made the colour for a schisme, and liberty of conscience the way to a bold and sawcy heresy: for the end may indeed hallow an indifferent action, but can never make straight a crooked and irregular. It was not enough for *Saul* to cry, for GOD and the sacrifice, that he spared the fat flocks of *Amalek*: and it would be a strange zeal and forwardnesse, that rather then the altar of incense should not smoke, will burn *assa fxtida*, or the marrow of a mans bones. For as GOD will be honoured by us, so also in wayes of his own appointment: for we are the makers of our own religion, if we in our zeal for GOD do what he hath forbidden us. And every sin committed for religion, is just such a violence done to it, as it seeks to prevent or remedy.

And so it is, if it be committed for an end or pretence of charity as well as of religion; we must be curious that no pretence engage us upon an action that is certainly criminal in its own nature; charity may sometimes require our lives, but no obligation can endear a damnation to us; we are not bound to the choice of an eternal ruine to save another. Indeed so far as an option will go, it may concern the excrescencies of piety to chooſe by a tacite or expresse act of volition to become anathema for our Brethren, that is, by putting a case and fiction of law to suppose it better and wish it rather, that I should perish then my Nation. Thus far is charitable, because it is innocent; for as it is great love to our Countrey, so it is no uncharitableness to our selves: for such options alwayes are ineffective, and produce nothing but rewards of charity, and a greater glory. And the holy JESUS himself, who onely could be, and was effectively accursed to save us, gott by it an exceeding and mighty glorification; and Saint Paul did himself advantage by his charitable devotion for his Countrey-men. But since, God never puts the question to us, so that either we or our nation must be damned, he having fixt every mans finall condition upon his own actions in the vertue and obedience of Christ, if we mistake the expresses of charity, and suffer our selves to be damned indeed for Gods glory, or our Brethrens good, we spoil the duty, and ruin our selves when our option comes to act. But it is observable, that although religion is often pretended to justifie a sin, yet charity is but seldom; which makes it full of suspicion, that religion is but the cover

13.

Videl librorum
Lxxv. 2. sam.
6 cap. 7. 8.
9. vers.

14.

Rom. 9. 3.

to

to the deaths head, and at the best is but an accusing of GOD, that he is not willing, or not able to preserve Religion without our irregular and impious cooperations. But however, though it might concern us to wish our selves rather accursed, then Religion, or our Prince, or our Country should perish (for I finde no instances that it is lawful so much as to wish it for the preservation of a single friend) yet it is against charity to bring such a wish to passe, and by sin to damn our selves really for a good end either of Religion or charity.

15 Let us therefore serve GOD, as he hath described the way, for all our access to him being acts of his free concession and grace must be by his own designation and appointment. We might as well have chosen, what shape our bodies should be of, as of what instances the substance of our religion should consist.

16 3. A third principle of temptation is, an opinion of prosecuting actions of civility, compliance, and society, to the luxation of a point of piety and stricter duty; and good natures, persons of humane and sweeter dispositions, are too apt to dash upon this rock of offence. But the evil, that I would note is, that there are some conditions of Men, to whom a vice is so accustomed, that he that mingles with them must handle the crime and teach the venome. There are some vices which are *national*, there are some that are points of *honour*, *some* are *civilities* of entertainment, and they are therefore accounted unavoidable, because the understandings of Men are degenerate as their manners, and it is accounted fortisli and phantastical not to communicate in their accustomed loosenesses. Amongst some Men all their first addresses are drinkings, their entertainments intemperate beyond the permissions of Christian austerity; their drink is humorous, and their humours quarrellous, and it is dishonourable not to engage in Duell, and venture your soul to ascertain an empty reputation. These inconveniencies rely upon false opinions, and vain fancies, having no greater foundation, then the fortisli discourses of ignorant and ungodly persons, and they have no peculiar and appropriate remedy, but a resolute severity of manners, and a consideration what is required of us as Christians to confront against those fonder customes and expectations from us, as we engage in the puddles of the world and are blended in society.

17. To which purposes we must be carefull not to engage too freely in loose company, never without business or unavoidable accidents; and when we mingle in affairs, it will concern our safety to watch, lest multitude of talk, goodness and facility of nature, the delight of company, and the freedom and ill customed civilities do by degrees draw us away from our guards and retirement of spirit. For in these cases, every degree of dissolution disarms us of our strengths, and if we give way so far, as we think it tolerable, we instantly and undiscernably passe into *unlawfull* and criminall. But our best defences are deposited in a severe and prudent understanding, and discerning the fortislihnese of such principles, which represent vice in civil language, and propound a crime to you under a cover of kindness, which is just so much recompence as it is satisfaction to a condemned person, that he was accused by a witty Oratour, and sentenced by an eloquent Judge. Remember alwayes, that the *friendships of the world are enmity with God*, and that those societies, which are combin'd by relations of drink & wantonnesse, and impertinency and crimes, are either considerable in civility,

ry, or reason, or reputation; no wise man is moved by their testimony, or discourses, and they are so impotent, rude and undiscerning a theatre, that most commonly he is the *best man*, who from thence is the *worst reported* and represented.

But in all the instances of this great evil, the very stating the question right is above half the victory. For it is a question between mistaken civility and certain duty: piety on one side, and the disguises of humanity on the other. God and Man are the parties interested, and to counterpoise the influence of the sight and face of man, (which being in a visible communication, it is not in some natures to neglect or contradict) there are all the excellencies of God, the effects of his power, his certain presence, and omniscience, the severities of his judgement, and the sweetnesse and invitation of his mercies, besides the prudence, wisdom and satisfaction to the spirit when we wisely neglect such foolish and low abuses and temptations, to conform to the rules of reason and duty in compliance with the purposes of God and our own felicity.

3. These ill managed principles are dangers as universal as an infected air; yet there are some diseases more proper to the particular state of religion, 1. to young beginners in religion he represents the difficulties of religion, and propounds the greater examples of holy persons, and affrights them with those mountains of piety, observing where and upon what instance of severity. his fancy will be most apprehensive and afflicted; & this he fails not often to represent with a purpose, that by believing no piety lesse, then the greatest can be good, he may despair of those heights and retire into the securities and indifferencies of a careless life. But this is to be cured by all those instruments of piety, which in speciall are incentives of the love of GOD, and endearments of spirituall and religious affections: and particularly by consideration of the Divine goodnesse, *who knows whereof we are made, and remembers that we are but dust*, and will require no more of us then according to our powers and present capacities. But the subject matter of this temptation is considered and refuted in the Discourse of the love of GOD.

But most commonly young beginners are zealous and high, and not so easily tempted to a recession, till after a long time by a revolution of affections they are abated by a deservescency in holy actions; the Devil uses to prompt them on, not that he loves the piety, and the progresse, but that he would engage the person in imprudences and such forwardnesse of expressions, which either are in their own nature, indiscretions, or from which, by reason of the incapacity of the person, it is necessary for him to retire. A *new Convert* is like a bird newly entred into a net, through which possibly he might passe without danger, if her fears and unreasonable strivings did not intangle her, but when by busy and disturbed flutterings she discomposes the order of it, she is intangled and unpenned, and made a prey to her treacherous Enemy. Such are the indiscreet strivings and too forward enterprises of *new penitents*, whom we shall observe too often undertaking great austerities, making vows and casting bands upon their libertie, and inares upon their persons, thinking nothing great enough to expiate their sin, or to present to GOD, or to endear their services, or secure their perseverance: and therefore they lay a load of fetters upon themselves, or rather cut off their legs, that they may never go back; therefore Laying an ob-

ligation

18

19

Part. 1. in Explicac. of the Decalogus 1. Com.

20

Theod ret 1. 5.
 4.

gation of vows and intollerable burdens on themselves, that by these they may by a *compendium* of piety redeem the time, and by those make it impossible to prevaricate. But the observation of the sad events and small accidents of these men hath given probation of the indiscretion of such furious addresses, and beginnings. And it was prudently done of *Meletius* of Antioch when he visited the diocesses of Syria, and the severall religious persons, famous for severe undertakings, espousing that *Simeon Stylites* dwelt upon a pillar, and had bound his leg with a strong chain of iron, he sent for a Smith causing it to be knocked off, and said, *To a man that loves GOD his mind is a sufficient chaine*. For the loads of voluntary austerities rashly undertaken makes religion a burden, when their first heats expire; and their vows which are intended to secure the practise and perpetuate the piety, are but the occasions of an aggravate crime, and the vow does not secure the piety, but the weariness and satiety of the duty tempts to the breaking of the vow, or at least makes the man impatient, when he cannot persist with content, nor retire with safety.

21.

It therefore concerns all spirituall guides to manage their new Converts with sober Counsels, and moderate permissions, knowing that sublimie speculations in the Metaphysicks are not fit entertainment for an infant understanding. *There is milk for babes and strong meat for men of riper piety*, and it will employ all the regular strength of young beginners to contest against the reliques of those mischiefs, which remain since the expulsion of the old man, and to master those difficulties, which by the nature of the state are certainly consequent to so late mutation. And if we by the suites of zeal, and the impatience of mistaken piety, are violent and indiscreet in the destroying of our Enemies, we probably may tread the thistle down, and trample upon all its appearances, and yet leave the root in the ground with hast, and imprudent forwardnesse. Gentle and soft counsels are the surest Enemies to your vice, and the best conservatours and promoters of a vertuous state: but a hasty charge, and the conduct of a young Leader may engage an early spirit in dangers, and dishonours. And this temptation is of so much greater danger, because it hath a face of zeal and meets with all encouragements from without, every Man being apt to cherish a new convert, and to enflame his new fires: but few consider the inconveniences that are consequent to indiscreet beginnings, and the worse events usually appendant to such inconveniences.

22.

Indeed it is not usuall that prudence and a new kindled zeal meet in the same person: but it will therefore concern the safety of new converts, who cannot guide themselves, to give themselves up to the conduct of an experienced spirituall person, who being disinterest in those heats of the first apprehensions, and being long taught by the observation of the accidents of a spirituall life, upon what rocks, rashnesse and zeal usually do engage us, can best tell what degrees and what instances of religion they may with most safety undertake: but for the generall, it is best in the addresses of grace to follow the course of nature; let there be an infancy, and a childhood, and a vigorous youth, and by the divers and distant degrees of increment let the persons be established in wisdom and grace. But above all things let them be carefull, that they do not lay upon themselves necessities of any lasting course; no *vows of perpetuity* in any instance of unmanded action, or degree of religion; for he may alter in his capacity and

and exteriour condition; he may see by experience, that the particular engagement is imprudent, he may by the vertue of obedience be engaged on a duty inconsistent with the conveniences and advantages of the other, and his very *losse of liberty* in an *uncommanded* instance may tempt him to inconvenience. But then, for the single and transient actions of piety, although in them the danger is lesse, even though the imprudence be great, yet it were well if new beginners in religion would attempt a moderate and an even piety, rather then actions of eminency, lest they retire with shame, and be afflicted with scruple; when their first heats are spent, and expire in wearinesse and temptation. It is good to keep within the circuits of a mans affections, not stretching out all the degrees of fancy and desire, but leaving the appetites of religion rather unsatisfied, and still desiring more, then by stretching out the whole faculty leave no desires, but what are fulfilled and wearied.

3. I shall not need here to observe such temptations, which are direct invitations to sin, upon occasion of the piety of holy persons, such as are security, too much confidence, pride and vanity; these are part of every mans danger, and are to be considered upon their severall arguments. Here I was onely to note the generall instruments of mischief. It remains now that I speak of such remedies and generall antidotes, not which are proportioned to sins in speciall, but such as are preventions or remedies, and good advices in generall.

1. Let every man abstain from all occasions of sin, as much as his condition will permit. And it were better to do some violence to our secular affairs, then to procure apparent or probable danger to our souls. For if we see not a way open and ready prepared to our iniquitie, our desires oftentimes are not willing to be troubled, but opportunitie gives life and activenesse to our appetites. If *David* had not from his towers beheld the private beauties of *Bathshebah*, *Uriah* had lived, and his wife been unattempted, but sin was brought to him by that chance, and entering at the casements of his eyes set his heart on fire, and despoiled him of his robes of honour and innocence. The riches of the wedge of gold, and the beauty of the Babylonish garment made *Achan* sacrilegious upon the place, who was innocent enough in his preceding purposes: and therefore that soul, that makes it self an object to sin, and invites an Enemy to view its possessions, and live in the voisinage, loves the sin it self: and he that is pleased with the danger, would willingly be betrayed into the necessity and the pleasure of the sin: for he can have no other ends to entertain the hazards; but that he hath a further purpose to serve upon them; he loves the pleasure of the sin, and therefore he would make the condition of sinning certain and unavoidable. And therefore holy Scripture, which is admirable and curious in the cautions and securities of vertue, does not determine its precepts in the precise commands of vertuous actions, but also binds up our senses, obstructs the passage of temptation, blocks up all the wayes, and avenues of vice, commanding us to make a covenant with our eyes, not to look upon a Maid, not to sit with a Woman that is a sinner, not to consider the wine when it sparkles, and gives its colour rightly in the cup, but to set a watch before our mouth, to keep the door of our lips, and many more instances to this purpose, that sin may not come so neer as to be repulled; as knowing

23.

24.

knowing sin hath then prevailed too far, when we give the denyall to its solicitations.

25.

We read a story of a vertuous Lady, that desired of *S. Athanasius* to procure for her, out of the number of the Widows sed from the Ecclesiasticall Corban, an old woman, morose, peevish, and impatient, that she might by the society of so ungentle a person have often occasion to exercise her patience, her forgiveness and charity. I know not how well the counsel succeeded with her; I am sure it was not very safe: and to invite the trouble to triumph over it, is to wage a war of an uncertain issue, for no end but to get the pleasures of the victory, which oftentimes do not pay for the trouble, never for the danger. An *Egyptian* who acknowledged fire for his God, one day doing his devotions kissed his God after the manner of worshippers, and burnt his lips. It was not in the power of that false and imaginary Deity to cure the real hurt he had done, to his devoutest worshipper. Just such a fool is he that kisses a danger, though with a designe of vertue, and hugs an opportunity of sin for an advantage of piety, he burns himself in the neighbourhood of the flame, and twenty to one but he may perish in its embraces; And he that looks out a danger, that he may overcome it, does as did the *Persian*, who worshipping the Sun, looked upon him, when he prayed him to cure his sore eyes. The Sun may as well cure a weak eye, or a great burden knit a broken arme, as a danger can do him advantage that seeks such a combat, which may ruine him, and after which he rarely may have this reward, that it may be said of him, he had the good fortune not to perish in his folly. It is easier to prevent a mischief then to cure it, and besides the pain of the wound, it is infinitely more full of difficulty to cure a broken leg, which a little care and observation would have preserved whole. To recover from a sin is none of the easiest labours, that concern the sons of men, and therefore it concerns them rather not to enter into a such a narrow streight, from which they can never draw back their head, without leaving their hair and skin, and their ears behinde. If *G O D* please to try us, he means us no hurt, and he does it with great reason, and great mercy; but if we go to try *our selves*, we may mean well, but not wisely: For as it is simply unlawfull for weak persons to seek a temptation, so for the more perfect it is dangerous. We have Enemies enough without, and one of our own within: but we become our own Tempter, when we run out to meet the world or invite the Devil home, that we may throw holy water upon his flames, and call the danger neerer, that we may run from it. And certainly men are more guilty of many of their temptations then the Devil, through their incuriousnesse or rashnesse, doing as much mischief to themselves, as he can. For he can but offer, and so much we do, when we run into danger. Such were those stories of *S. Anthony* provoking the Devil to battel; If the stories had been as true, as the actions were rash, and ridiculous, the story had fastned a note of indiscretion upon that good Man: though now I think there is nothing, but a mark of fiction and falshood on the writer.

2. Possibly without fault we may be engaged in a temptation, but then we must be diligent to resist the *first beginnings*: For, when our strength is yet intire, and unabated, if we suffer our selves to be overcome, and consent to its first, and weakest attempts, how shall we be able to resist, when it hath tyred our contestation, and wearied our patience, when we are weaker

and

Sed quid ego
omne malum
mundiq; homi-
numq; maligni
Hostis ad invidi-
diam detorqueo?
quom mala
nostra

Ex nostris con-
ereta animis, ge-
nus & caput &
vim,
quid sint, quid
valeant sumunt
de corde paren-
te. Prud. Ha nar.

Eccles. 21. 27.
Quon exsecratur
impus Satana,
sua ipsius ani-
mam exsecratur.

26.

and prevailed upon, and the temptation is stronger and triumphant in many degrees of victory. By how much a hecticke Fever is harder to be cured than a Tertian, or a consumption of the lungs, than a little distillation of rheume upon the throat; by so much is it harder to prevail upon a triumphing lust, than upon its first insinuations: But the wayes of resisting are of a different consideration, proportionably to the nature of the crimes.

1. If the temptation be to crimes of pleasure, and sensuality; let the resistance be by flight: For in case of lust even to consider the arguments against it, is half as great temptation as to press the arguments for it. For all considerations of such allurements makes the soul perceive something of its relish, and entertains the Fancies. Even the pulling pitch from our clothes defiles the fingers, and some adherences of pleasant and carnall sins will be remanent, even from those considerations, which stay within the circuit of the flames, though but with purpose to quench the fire and preserve the house. Chastity cannot suffer the least thought of the reproaches of the spirit of impurity: and it is necessary to all, that will keep their purity, and innocence against sensuall temptation, to avoyd every thing that may prejudice decorum. Libanius the Sophister reports, that a Painter one day desirous to paint Apollo upon a lawrell boord, the colours would not stick but were rejected, out of which his fancy found out this extraction; that the chaste Daphne (concerning whom the Poets faine that flying from Apollo, who attempted to ravish her, she was turned into a Lawrell tree) could not endure him even in painting, and rejected him after the losse of her sensitive powers. And indeed chaste souls do even to death resent the least image and offer of impurity: whatsoever is like a sin of uncleannesse, he, that means to preserve himself chaste, must avoyd, as he would avoyd the sin; in this case there being no difference but of degrees between the inward temptation, and the crime.

2. If the temptation be, to crimes of troublesome and preternaturall desires, or intellectuall nature, let the resistance be made *confessa manu*, by a perfect fight, by the amassing of such arguments in generall, and remedies in particular, which are apt to become deleteries to the sin, and to abate the temptation. But in both these instances, the resistance must at least be as soon as the attempt is, lest the violence of the temptation overrun our powers; for if against our full strength it hath prevailed to the first degrees, its progresse to a complete victory is not so improbable, as were its successes at the first beginnings.

But to serve this and all other ends in the refitting and subduing a Temptation, these following considerations have the best and most universall influence.

1. Consideration of the presence of God, who is witness of all our actions, and a revenger of all impiety : This is so great an instrument of fear and religion, that whoever does actually consider God to be present, and considers what the first consideration signifies, either must be restrained from the present temptation, or must have thrown off all the possibilities and aptnesses for virtue ; such as are, Modesty, and Reverence, and holy Fear. For if the face of a Man scatters all base machinations, and we dare not act our crimes in the Theatre, unless we be impudent, as well as criminal ; much more does the sense of a present Deity fill the places of our heart with veneration.

veneration, and the awe of religion, when it is thoroughly apprehended and actually considered. We see not God, *he is not in our thoughts*, when we run into darknesse to act our impurities. For we dare not commit adultery, if a boy be present; behold the boy is sent off with an excuse, and God abides there, but yet we commit the crime: it is because, as Jacob said at Bethel, *God was in that place and we knew not of it*; and yet we neither breathe, nor move an artery but in him, and by his assistance. *In him we live, and move, and have our being.* And all things are naked and open in his sight. *The iniquity of my people is very great: for they say, the Lord seeth not. Shall not he that made the eye, see? To him the night and day are both alike.* These and many more to the same design are the voices of Scripture, that our spirits may retire into the beholding of GOD, to the purposes of fear and holinesse, with whom we do cohabit by the necessities of nature, and the condition of our essence, wholly in dependance; and then onely we may sin securely, when we can contrive to do it, so that GOD may not see us.

Act. 17. Hebr.
4. Psal. 9. Ezek
9. Jer. 23.

33.

Eph. 6.

Non n. virtute
ac studijs utha-
berentur philo-
sophi labora-
bant. sed vultum,
et tristitiam et
diffidentem a
ceteris habitum
pestimis mori-
bus pretende-
bant. Quintil:
l. 1. proœ:
Ambitio, et lux-
uria et impoten-
tia scenam desi-
derant; sanabis,
sista si absconde-
vis Senec ep. 9
Magna vobis si
disi nullare non
vultis injecta
necessitas pro-
hibitatis cum om-
nia agitis ante
oculos judicis
cuncta cernen-
tis. Boeth: lib.
5 consol: prola-
uit:

31.

There are many men, who are *servants of the eyes*, as the Apostles phrase is, who when they are looked on, act vertue with much pompousnesse, and theatricall bravery: But these men, when the Theatre is empty, put off their upper garment, and retire into their primitive basenesse; Diogenes endured the extremity of winters cold, that the people might wonder at his austerity and philosophicall patience: but Plato, seeing the people admiring the man, and pitying the sufferance, told them, that the way to make him warm himself was, for them to be gone and take no notice of him. For they that walk as in the sight of men serve that design well enough, when they fill the publike voice with noises and opinions, and are not by their purposes engaged to act in private. But they who are servants of the eyes of God, and walk as in the Divine presence, perceive the same restraints in darknesse and closets, and grots, as in the light and midst of theatres, and that consideration imposes upon us a *happy necessity of doing virtuously, which represents us placed in the eyes of our Judge.* And therefore it was not unhandsonely said of a Jewish Doctor: *If every man would consider God to be the great eye of the world watching perpetually over all our actions, and that his hand is indefatigable, and his ear ever open, possibly sin might be extirpated from off the face of the earth.* And this is the condition of beatitude; and the blessed souls within their regions of light and felicity cannot sin, because of the vision beatifically, they alwayes behold the face of GOD; and those who partake of this state by way of consideration, which is essential to the condition of the Blessed, and derive it into practise and discourse, in proportion to this shall retain an innocence and a part of glory.

For it is a great declension of humane reason, and a disreputation to our Spirits, that we are so wholly led by sense, that we will not walk in the regions of the Spirit, and behold God by our eyes of faith and discourse; suffering our course of life to be guided by such principles, which distinguish our natures from beasts, and our conditions from vicious, and our spirits from the world, and our hopes from the common satisfactions of sense and Corruption. The better half of our nature is of the same constitution with that of Angels, and therefore although we are drenched in matter, and the communications of Earth, yet our better part was designed to converse with God; and we had besides the eye of reason,

son another eye of faith put into our souls, and both clarified with revelations and demonstrations of the Spirit, expressing to us so visible and clear characters of Gods presence, that as the expression of the same Spirit is, *We may feel him, for he is within us*, and about us, and we are in him, and in the comprehensions of his embracings as birds in the Air, or infants in the wombs of their pregnant Mothers. And that God is pleased not to communicate himself to the eyes of our body, but still to remain invisible, besides that it is his own glory and perfection, it is also no more to us, but like a retreat behind a curtain, where when we know our Judge stands as an Esquire, and a watch over our actions, we shall be sottish if we dare to provoke his jealousy, because we see him not; when we know him that he is close by, though behind the cloud.

There are some generall impressions upon our spirits which by way of presumption and custom possess our persuasions and make restraint upon us to excellent purposes, such as are the religion of holy places, reverence of our Parents, presence of an austere or honourable or a virtuous person. For many sins are prevented by the company of a witness, especially if besides the eyes of modesty we have also toward him an endearment of reverence, and fair opinion, and if he were with us in our privacies, he would cause our retirements to be more holy. Saint Ambrose reports of the Virgin Mary, that she had so much piety and religion in her countenance and deportment, that divers persons moved by the veneration and regard of her person, in her presence have first commenced their resolutions of chastity and sober living. However the story be, her person certainly was of so expresse and great devotion and sanctity, that he must needs have been of a very impudent disposition, and firm immodesty, who durst have spoken unhand-some language in the presence of so rare a person. And why then any rudeness in the presence of God? if that were as certainly believed and considered. For whatsoever amongst men can be a restraint of vice, or an endearment of virtue, all this is highly verified in the presence of God, to whom our conscience in its very concealments is as a faire table written in capitall letters by his own finger; and then, if we fail of the advantage of this exercise it must proceed either from our dishonourable opinion of God, or our own fearless inadvertency, or from a direct spirit of reprobation: for it is certain, that this consideration is in its own nature apt to correct our manners, to produce the fear of God, and humility, and spirituall, and holy thoughts, and the knowledge of God, and of our selves, and the consequents of all these, holy walking, and holy comforts. And by this onely argument Saint Paphnutius, and Saint Ephrem are reported in Church story to have converted two harlots from a course of dissolution to great sanctity and austerity.

But then this presence of GOD must not be a meer speculation of the understanding, though so onely it is of very great benefit and immediate efficacy, yet it must reflect as well from the will as from discourse, and then onely we walk in the presence of GOD, when by faith we behold him present, when we speak to him in frequent and holy Prayers, when we beg aid from him in all our needs, and ask counsel of him in all our doubts, and before him bewail our sins and tremble

L

AII. 17. 27.

Paphnutius in his

Dile

Hic in ierusalem

et in galilee

et in aliis

et in aliis

et in aliis

et in aliis

et in aliis

32.

Aliquem habet aut
mon quoniam reve-
nari, co-
jus auctoritate etiam
serenone roun Gan-
dus fiat. Quid pro-
dest inclusione esse
conscientiam? pau-
mus Deo. Seneca. l. i.
ep. 11.

* Tiberius J inter hoc
na maly, miron lo-
colum mone incho-
billa scilicet, sed obli-
tus libidinis dum
sejanum dilecti ti-
muit: postremo in
scelus simul ac deo-
cora prorupit, post-
quam tremor pudor
et metu, suo tantum
ingento urebatur.
Tacit. l. 4.

et in aliis
et in aliis
et in aliis
et in aliis
et in aliis
et in aliis
et in aliis
et in aliis
et in aliis
et in aliis

Sophoc. Ajax.

33

GOD, and the wisest personages of the world. *My soul is alwayes in my hand, therefore doe I keep thy commandments,* said David: He looked upon himself as a dying person, and that restrained all his inordinations, and so he prayed, *LORD teach me to number my dayes that I may apply my heart unto wisdom.* And therefore the Egyptians used to serve up a Skeleton to their feasts, that the dissolutions and vapours of wine might be restrained with that bunch of myrthe, and the vanities of their eyes chastised by that sad object: for they thought it unlikely a man should be transported farre with any thing low or vicious, that looked long and often into the hollow eye-pits of a deaths head, or dwelt in a charnell house: and such considerations make all the importunity and violence of sensuall desires to disband. For when a man stands perpetually at the door of Eternity, and as did John the Almoner, every day is building of his Sepulchre, and every night one day of our life is gone and passed into the possession of death, it will concern us to take care, that the door leading to Hell doe not open upon us, that we be not cruelt to ruine by the stones of our grave, and that our death become not a consignment to us to a sad eternity. For all the pleasures of the whole world, and in all its duration, cannot make recompence for one hours torment in hell, and yet if wicked persons were to sit in hell for ever without any change of posture, or variety of torment beyond that session; it were unfeisible beyond the endurance of nature: and therefore where little lesse than infinite misery in an infinite duration shall punish the pleasures of sudden and transient crimes, the gain of pleasure, and the exchange of banks here for a condition of eternall, and miserable death, is a permutation fit to be made by none but *fools* and *desperate persons*, who made no use of a reasonable soul, but that they in their perishing might be convinced of unreasonableness, and die by their own fault.

The use that wise men have made, when they reduced this consideration to practise, is to believe every day to be the last of their life, for so it may be, and for ought we know it will; and then think what you would avoid, or what you would do, if you were dying, or were to day to suffer death by sentence, and conviction; and that in all reason, and in proportion to the strength of your consideration you will do every day. For that is the sublimity of wisdom to do these things living which are to be desired and chosen by dying persons. An allarm of death every day renewed, and pressed earnestly will watch a man so tame and soft, that the precepts of religion will dwell deep in his spirit. But they that make a covenant with the grave, and put the evill day farre from them, they are the men that eat spiders and toads for meat greedily, and a temptation to them is as welcome as joy, and they seldom dispure the point in behalf of piety or mortification, for they that look upon death at distance, apprehend it not, but in such generall lines and great representations that describe it only as future and possible, but nothing of its terrors, or affrightments, or circumstances of advantage are discernable by such an eye that disturbs its sight and discomposes the posture, that the object may seeme another thing, then what it is truly and really. *S. Austin* with his Mother *Monica* was led one day by a Roman Prætor to see the tomb of *Cæsar*.

Psal. 90.

Θάνατος ἀντὶ τοῦ
Σαλμωνος ἵσταται
ἐν τῇ ὁδοῦ αὐτοῦ, ὅτι
ἐπὶ τὴν ἑσπέραν
ἐκείνην ἐκώλυσε
τὸν δαίμονα τοῦ
κόσμου, καὶ οὕτως
ἐκείνην τὴν νύκτα
ἐπὶ τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ
ἐπὶ τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ.
cap. 28.

Inquenda tel-
lus, & domus, &
placens
Uxor: neq; ha-
rur, quas colis,
arborum
Te præter invitas
cupressos
Ulla brevem do-
mum in sequetur.
Hor. l. 2. od. 14

36.

Hic est apex
summa sapientia
ea vivente face-
re quæ morienti
essent appetenda
Cicero.

Kai jō iō eon-
 dō-lu, Niu
 μωδης βαπτα-
 ου. In epitaph.
 Sardanapali.
 Ἠδὲναι αἰα δ-
 μω τῶν ἀντι-
 κειμένων
 Ἀνδρῶν, ἐν τῷ δ-
 ναί τῶν μὴδων
 Ἰουδα. *Fragm.*
Theogn.
In speculo mo-
nach.

"Himself thus describes the corps. It looked of a blew mould, the bone of the nose laid bare, the flesh of the neither lip quite fallen off, his mouth full of worms, and in his eye pits two hungry toads feasting upon the remanent portion of flesh and moisture, and so he dwelt in his house of darkness. And if every person tempted by an opportunity of *lust* or *intemperance* would choose such a room for his privacy, that company for his witness, that object to allay his appetite, he would soon finde his spirit more sober, and his desires obedient. I end this with the counsel of *S. Bernard*. * Let every man in the first addresse to his actions consider, whether if he were now to die, he might safely and prudently do such an act, and whether he would not be infinitely troubled that death should surprize him in the present dispositions, and then let him proceed accordingly. For since our treasure is in earthen vessels, which may be broken in pieces by the collision of ten thousand accidents, it were not safe to treasure up wrath in them, for if we doe, we shall certainly drinke it in the day of recompense.

36.
 Matth. 26. 41.

3. Before, and in, and after all this the blessed JESUS propounds prayer as a remedy against temptations: *Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation*: for besides that prayer is the great instrument of obtaining victory by the grace of GOD, as a fruit of our desires, and of GODS naturall and essentiall goodnesse; the very praying against a temptation, if it be hearty, fervent and devout, is a denying of it, and part of the victory: for it is a disclaiming the entertainment of it, it is a positive rejection of the crime; and every consent to it is a *ceasing to pray*, and to desire remedy. And we shall observe that whenever we begin to listen to the whispers of a tempting spirit: our prayers against it lessen, as the consent increases, their being nothing a more direct enemy to the temptation then prayer, which as it is of it self a professed hostility against the crime, so it is a calling in auxiliaries from above to make the victory more certain. *If temptation sets upon thee, do thou set upon GOD*, for he is as soon overcome as thou art, as soon moved to good as thou art to evil, * he is as quickly invited to pity thee, as thou to ask him, provided, thou doest not finally *rest in the petition*, but *pass into action*, and endeavour by all means humane and morall to quench the flame newly kindled in thy bowels before it come to devour the marrow of the bones. For a strong prayer, and a lazy, incurious, unobservant walking are contradictions in the discourses of religion. ^a *Ruffinus* tells a story of a young man, solicited by the spirit of uncleannesse, who came to an old religious person, and begged his prayers: It was in that age when GOD used to answer prayers of very holy persons by more clear and familiar significations of his pleasure, then he knows now to be necessary: but after many earnest prayers sent up to the throne of grace, and the young man not at all bettered, upon consideration and enquiry of particulars, he found the cause to be, because the young man relied so upon the prayers of the old Hermit, that he did nothing at all to discountenance his lust, or contradict the temptation. But then he took another course, enjoyed him austerities and exercises of Devotion, gave him rules of prudence and caution, tyed him to work, and to stand upon his guard, and then the prayers returned in triumph, and the young Man trampled

* — his levare
 sanctum
 pauperem labo-
 riosus
 vocatus atq; non
 vocatus audit.
Her. l. 2. c. d. 18.
^a *Lib. 3. 13.*

pled upon his lust. And so shall I and you, by GODS grace, if we pray earnestly and frequently, if we watch carefully, that we be not surprized, if we be not idle in secret, nor talkative in publick; if we read Scriptures, and consult with a spiritual Guide; and make Religion to be our work, that serving of GOD be the businesse of our life, and our designs be to purchase eternity; then we shall walk safely or recover speedily, and by doing advantages to piety secure a greatnesse of Religion, and spirituality to our spirits and understandings. But remember that, when Israel fought against Amalek, *Moses* prayer, and *Moses* hand secured the victory, his prayer grew ineffectual, when his hands were slack, to remonstrate to us, that we must cooperate with the grace of GOD praying devoutly, and watching carefully, and observing prudently, and labouring with diligence and assiduity.



THE PRAYER.

ETernal GOD and most mercifull Father, I adore thy wisdom, providence and admirable dispensation of affairs in the spirituall Kingdome of our LORD JESUS, that thou, who art infinitely good, dost permit so many sadnesse and dangers to discompose that order of things and spirits, which thou didst create innocent and harmlesse, and dost designe to great and spirituall perfections; that the emanation of good from evil by thy overruling power and excellencies, may force glory to thee from our shame, and honour to thy wisdom by these contradictory accidents, and events; LORD, have pity upon me in these sad disorders, and with mercy know my infirmities. Let me, by suffering what thou pleasest, cooperate to the glorification of thy grace, and magnifying thy mercy; but never let me consent to sinne, but with the power of thy Majesty, and mightinesse of thy prevailing mercy, rescue me from those throngs of dangers, and enemies, which daily seek to deflow that innocence, with which thou didst clothe my soul in the new birth. Behold, O GOD, how all the Spirits of Darknesse endeavour the extinction of our hopes, and the dispersion of all those graces, and the prevention of all those glories, which the holy JESUS hath purchased for every loving and obedient soul. Our very meat and drink are full of poison, our senses are snares, our businesse is various temptation, our sins are inlets to more, and our good actions made occasions of sinnes. LORD deliver me from the malice of the Devil, from the fallacies of the World, from my own felty, that I be not devoured by the first, nor cheated by the

Second, nor betrayed by my self : but let thy grace which is sufficient for me, be always present with me, let thy spirit instruct me in the spiritual warfare, arming my understanding, and securing my will, and fortifying my spirit with resolutions of piety, and incentives of religion, and deleteries of sin ; that the dangers I am encompassed withall, may become unto me an occasion of victory, and triumph, through the aides of the holy Ghost, and by the Crosse of the LORD JESUS, who hath for himself and all his servants triumphed over Sin, and Hell, and the Grave, even all the powers of darknesse, from which by the mercies of JESUS, and the merits of his Passion, now and ever deliver me and all thy faithfull people. Amen.

"A-y-G o O-b-s.

